SACRED DRAMAS:

CHIEFLY INTENDED

FOR YOUNG PERSONS:

THE SUBJECTS TAKEN FROM THE BIBLE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

SENSIBILITY,

A POEM.

Henrietta Barnet

SEVENTH EDITION.

All the Books of the BIBLE are either moſt admirable and exalted Pieces of Poetry, or are the beſt materials in the world for it. COWLEY.

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CONTENTS.

THE INTRODUCTION, - Page 1
MOSES, - - - - - - - 11
DAVID AND GOLIATH, - 45
BELSHAZZAR, - - - 125
DANIEL, - - - - - 191
HEZEKIAH, - - - - 255
SENSIBILITY, - - - 267

TO HER GRACE

THE DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT;

THESE SACRED DRAMAS

ARE, WITH THE MOST PERFECT RESPECT,

INSCRIBED:

AS, AMONG THE MANY AMIABLE

AND DISTINGUISHED QUALITIES

WHICH ADORN HER MIND,

AND ADD LUSTRE TO HER RANK,

HER EXCELLENCE IN THE MATERNAL CHARACTER

GIVES A PECULIAR PROPRIETY

TO HER PROTECTION OF THIS LITTLE WORK;

WRITTEN WITH AN HUMBLE WISH

TO PROMOTE THE LOVE OF PIETY AND VIRTUE

IN YOUNG PERSONS;

BY HER GRACE'S

MOST OBEDIENT,

MOST OBLIGED, AND

MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

HANNAH MORE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

I AM as ready as the moſt rigid Critic, to confeſs, that nothing can be more ſimple and inartificial than the plans of the following Dramas. In the conſtruction of them, I have ſeldom ventured to introduce any perſons * of my own creation: ſtill leſs did I imagine myſelf at liberty to invent circumſtances. I reflected, with awe, that *the place whereon I ſtood was holy ground.* All the latitude I permitted myſelf, was, to

* Never, indeed, except in DANIEL, and that of neceſſity; as the Bible furniſhes no more than two perſons, Daniel and Darius; and theſe were not ſufficient to carry on the buſineſs of the piece.

make ſuch perſons as I ſelected, act under ſuch circumſtances as I found; and expreſs ſuch ſentiments as, in my humble judgment, appeared not unnatural to their ſituations.—Some of the ſpeeches are ſo long, as to retard the action; for I rather aſpired after Moral Inſtruction, than the purity of Dramatic Compoſition. The very terms of Act and Scene are avoided; becauſe I was unwilling to awaken the attention of the Reader to my deficiencies in critical exactneſs.

It will be thought that I have choſen, perhaps, the leaſt important paſſage in the eventful Life of David, for the foundation of the Drama which bears his name. Yet even in this, his firſt exploit, the ſacred Hiſtorian repreſents him as exhibiting no mean leſſon of modeſty, humility, courage, and

and piety: virtues not only admirable, but imitable; and within the reach of every Reader. Many will think, that the introduction of Saul's daughter would have added to the effect of the piece: and I have no doubt but that it would have made the intrigue more complicated, and more intereſting, had this Drama been intended for the Stage. There, all that is tender, and all that is terrible in the paſſions, find a proper place. But I write for the Young, in whom it will be always time enough to have them awakened; I write for a claſs of Readers, to whom it is not eaſy to accommodate one's ſubject *.

A very

* It would not be eaſy, I believe, to introduce Sacred Tragedies on the Engliſh Stage. The ſcrupulous would think it profane, while the profane would think

A very judicious and learned friend has remarked, that the *Reflections of King Hezekiah* breathe rather too much of the ſpirit of Chriſtianity: for that it is ſcarcely probable he had ſo ſettled a belief in the General Judgment. I feel the juſtneſs of the objection, without having been able to obviate it. I wiſhed to convey a ſtrong idea of this great leading truth; and have, perhaps improperly, aſcribed ſentiments to a Jewiſh monarch, merely becauſe I wiſhed to impreſs them on the Chriſtian Reader.

The Critic and the Scholar, if any ſuch ſhould honour theſe pages with their atten-

think it dull. Yet the excellent RACINE, in a diſſipated country, and a voluptuous court, ventured to adapt the ſtory of *Athaliah* to the French Theatre; and it remains to us a glorious monument of its Author's courageous piety, and of the perfection of the Dramatic Art.

tion,

tion, will find ample matter on which to exercise their candor and their charity; qualities so natural to genius and to learning, that even the feebleness of my performance will not be able to obstruct the exertion of them in favour of my intention.

The amiable Poet * from whom I have taken my motto, after shewing the superiority of the Sacred, over the Profane Histories (some instances of which I have noticed in my Introduction), concludes with the following remark, which I may apply to myself with more propriety than it was used by the Author:—"I am far from assuming "to myself, to have fulfilled the duty of this "weighty undertaking; and I shall be am-

* Cowley.

"bitious

" bitious of no other fruit from this weak
" and imperfect attempt of mine, but the
" opening of a way to the courage and in-
" duſtry of ſome other perſons, who may
" be better able to perform it thoroughly
" and ſucceſsfully."

THE

INTRODUCTION.

O For the ſacred energy, which ſtruck
The harp of Jeſſe's ſon! or for a ſpark
Of that celeſtial flame, which touch'd the lips
Of bleſs'd Iſaiah *; when the Seraphim
With living fire deſcended, and his ſoul
From ſin's pollution purg'd! or one faint ray,
(If human things to heavenly I may join)
Of that pure ſpirit, which inflam'd the breaſt
Of Milton, God's own poet! when, retir'd
In fair enthuſiaſtic viſion rapt,
The *nightly viſitant* deign'd bleſs his couch
With inſpiration, ſuch as never flow'd

* Iſaiah, chap. vi.

From Aganippe's fount, or Acidale!
Then, when the ſacred fire within him burnt,
He ſpake, as man or angel might have ſpoke,
When man was pure, and angels were his gueſts.

It will not be.—Nor prophet's burning zeal,
Nor muſe of fire, nor yet to ſweep the ſtrings,
With ſacred energy to me belongs;
Nor with Miltonic hand to touch the chords,
That wake to ecſtacy. From me, alas!
The ſecret ſource of harmony is hid;
The magic powers which catch the raviſh'd ſoul
In melody's ſweet maze, and the clear ſtreams
Which to pure Fancy's yet untaſted ſprings
Enchanted lead. Of theſe I nothing know;
Yet, all unknowing, dare thy aid invoke,
Spirit of Truth! who graciouſly haſt ſaid,
That none who aſk in faith ſhould aſk in vain.

You I invoke not now, ye fabled Nine!
I not invoke you, though you well were ſought

In

In Greece and Latium, by immortal bards,
Whoſe ſyren ſong enchants; and ſhall enchant,
Thro' Time's wide-circling round, tho' falſe their faith,
And leſs than human were the gods they ſung.
Tho' falſe their faith, they taught the beſt they knew;
And, bluſh, O Chriſtians! liv'd above their faith,
They wou'd have bleſs'd the beam, and hail'd the day
Which chas'd the moral darkneſs from their ſouls.
O! had their minds receiv'd the clearer ray
Of true devotion, they had learn'd to ſcorn
Their deities impure, their ſenſeleſs gods,
And wild mythology's fantaſtic maze.

Pure PLATO! how had thy chaſte ſpirit hail'd
A faith ſo fitted to thy moral ſenſe!
What hadſt thou felt, to ſee the fair romance
Of high imagination, the bright dream
Of thy pure fancy more than realiz'd!
O ſweet enthuſiaſt! thou hadſt bleſt a ſcheme
Fair, good, and perfect. How had thy rapt ſoul

Caught fire, and burnt with a diviner flame!
For ev'n thy fair idea ne'er conceiv'd
Such plenitude of love, ſuch boundleſs bliſs,
As Deity made viſible to ſenſe.
Unhappy BRUTUS! philoſophic mind!
Great 'midſt the errors of the Stoic ſchool!
How had his kindling ſpirit joy'd to find
That his lov'd virtue was no empty name:
Nor had he met the viſion at Philippi;
Nor had he ſheath'd his bloody dagger's point,
Or in the breaſt he lov'd, or in his own.

The Pagan page how far more wiſe than ours!
They with the gods they worſhipp'd grac'd their ſong;
Our ſong we grace with gods we diſbelieve;
The manners we adopt without the creed,
Shall Fiction only raiſe poetic flame,
And ſhall no altars blaze, O TRUTH! to thee?
Shall falſehood only pleaſe, and fable charm?
And ſhall eternal Truth neglected lie?
Becauſe immortal, ſlighted or profan'd?

Truth

Truth has our rev'rence only, not our love;
Our praiſe, but not our heart. A deity,
Confeſs'd, but ſhunn'd; acknowledg'd, not ador'd;
She comes too near us, and ſhe ſhines too bright.
Her penetrating beam at once betrays
What we wou'd hide from others and ourſelves.

Why ſhun to make our duty our delight?
Let *pleaſure* be the motive (and allow
That immortality be quite forgot:)
Where ſhall we trace, thro' all the page profane,
A livelier pleaſure, and a purer ſource
Of innocent delight, than the fair book
Of holy Truth preſents? For ardent youth,
The ſprightly narrative; for years mature,
The moral document, in ſober robe
Of grave philoſophy array'd: which all
Had heard with admiration, had embrac'd
With rapture; had the ſhades of Academe,
Or the learn'd Porch produc'd it. Then, O then,
How Wiſdom's hidden treaſures had been couch'd
Beneath fair Allegory's graceful veil!

Do not the pow'rs of ſoul-enchanting ſong,
Strong imag'ry, bold figure, every charm
Of eaſtern flight ſublime, apt metaphor,
And all the graces in thy lovely train,
Divine Simplicity! aſſemble all
In Sion's ſongs, and bold Iſaiah's ſtrain?

Why ſhou'd the claſſic eye delight to trace
How Pyrrha and the fam'd Theſſalian * king
Reſtor'd the ruin'd race of loſt mankind;
Yet turn, incurious, from the patriarch ſav'd,
The righteous remnant of a delug'd world?
Why are we taught, delighted, to recount
Alcides' labours, yet neglect to learn
How mighty Samſon led a life of toil
Herculean? Pain and peril mark'd them both;
A life eventful, and diſaſtrous death.
Can all the tales, which Grecian records yield;
Can all the names the Roman page records,
Renown'd for friendſhip and ſurpaſſing love;

* Deucalion.

Can

Can gallant Theſeus and his brave compeer;
Oreſtes, and the partner of his toils;
Achates and his friend; Euryalus
And blooming Niſus, pleaſant in their lives,
And undivided by the ſtroke of death;
Can each, can all, a lovelier picture yield
Of virtuous friendſhip: can they all preſent
A tenderneſs more touching than the love
Of Jonathan and David?—Speak, ye young!
You who are undebauch'd by faſhion's lore,
And, unſophiſticate, from nature judge,
Say, is your quick attention ſtronger drawn,
By waſted Thebes, than Pharaoh's ſmitten hoſts?
Or do the vagrant Trojans yield a theme
More grateful to the eager appetite
Of young impatience, than the wand'ring tribes,
By Moſes thro' the thirſty deſert led?
The beauteous * Maid (tho' tender is the tale,)
Whoſe guiltleſs blood on Aulis' altar ſtream'd,

---

* Iphigenia.

Smites not the boſom with a ſofter pang
Than Jephthah's daughter, doom'd like her to die.

Such are the lovely themes, which court the Muſe,
Scarce yet eſſay'd in verſe. O let me mourn,
That heav'n-deſcended ſong ſhould e'er forget
Its ſacred dignity and high deſcent;
Should e'er ſo far its origin debaſe,
To ſpread corruption's bane, to lull the bad
With flattery's opiate ſtrain; to taint the heart
Of innocence, and ſilently infuſe
Delicious poiſon, whoſe inſidious charm
Feeds the ſick mind, and fondly miniſters
Unwholeſome pleaſure to the fever'd taſte;
While its fell venom, with malignant pow'r,
Strikes at the root of virtue, with'ring all
Her vital energy. Oh! for ſome balm
Of ſov'reign power, to raiſe the drooping Muſe
To all the health of virtue! to infuſe
A gen'rous warmth, to rouſe an holy pride,
And give her high conceptions of herſelf!

For me, eternal Spirit! let thy word
My path illume! O thou compaſſionate GOD!
Thou know'ſt our frame, thou know'ſt we are but duſt.
From duſt a Seraph's zeal thou wilt not aſk,
An Angel's purity. Oh! as I ſtrive,
Tho' with a feeble voice and flagging wing,
A glowing heart, but pow'rleſs hand, to tell
The faith of favour'd man to heav'n; to ſing
The ways inſcrutable of heav'n to man;
May I, by thy celeſtial guidance led,
Fix deeper in my heart the truths I ſing!
In my own life tranſcribe whate'er of good
To others I propoſe! and by thy rule
Correct th' irregular *, reform the wrong,
Exalt the low, and brighten the obſcure!
Still may I note, how all th' agreeing parts

---

* What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raiſe and ſupport.
PARADISE LOST.

Of

Of this well-order'd fabric join'd to frame
One fair, one finiſh'd, one harmonious whole!
Trace the cloſe clinks, which form the perfect chain
In beautiful connexion; mark the ſcale
Whoſe nice gradations, with progreſſion true,
For ever riſing, end in DEITY!

MOSES

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

I will assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to man.

PARADISE LOST.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

HEBREW WOMEN.

JOCHEBED, Mother of MOSES.
MIRIAM, his Sister.

EGYPTIANS.

The PRINCESS, King PHAROAH's Daughter;
MELITA; and other Attendants.

SCENE, on the Banks of the NILE.

☞ The ſubject is taken from the Second Chapter of the Book of Exodus.

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

PART I.

JOCHÈBED, MIRIAM.

JOCHÈBED.

WHY was my pray'r accepted? why did heav'n
In anger hear me, when I aſk'd a ſon?
Ye dames of Egypt! happy, happy mothers!
No tyrant robs you of your fondeſt hopes;
You are not doom'd to ſee the babes you bore,
The babes you nurture, bleed before your eyes!
You taſte the tranſports of maternal love,
And never know its anguiſh! Happy mothers!

How

How different is the lot of thy ſad daughters,
O wretched Iſrael! Was it then for this?
Was it for this the righteous arm of GOD
Reſcued his choſen people from the jaws
Of cruel want, by pious Joſeph's care?
Joſeph! th' elected inſtrument of heav'n,
Decreed to ſave illuſtrious Abraham's race,
What time the famine rag'd in Canaan's land.
Iſrael, who then was ſpar'd muſt periſh now!

Oh thou myſterious pow'r! who haſt involv'd
Thy wiſe decrees in darkneſs, to perplex
The pride of human wiſdom, to confound
The daring ſcrutiny, and prove the faith
Of thy preſuming creatures! clear this doubt;
Teach me to trace this maze of Providence:
Why ſave the fathers, if the ſons muſt periſh?

MIRIAM.

Ah me, my mother! whence theſe floods of grief?

JOCHEBED.

JOCHÉBED.

My ſon! my ſon! I cannot ſpeak the reſt.
Ye who have ſons can only know my fondneſs!
Ye who have loſt them, or who fear to loſe,
Can only know my pangs! none elſe can gueſs them.
A mother's ſorrows cannot be conceiv'd,
But by a mother—Wherefore am I one?

MIRIAM.

With many pray'rs thou didſt requeſt this ſon,
And heav'n has granted him.

JOCHÉBED.

O ſad eſtate
Of human wretchedneſs! ſo weak is man,
So ignorant and blind, that did not GOD
Sometimes withhold in mercy what we aſk,
We ſhou'd be ruin'd at our own requeſt.

Too well thou know'ſt, my child, the ſtern decree
Of Egypt's cruel king, hard-hearted Pharoah;

" That ev'ry male, of Hebrew mother born,
" Muſt die." Oh! do I live to tell it thee?
Muſt die a bloody death! My child, my ſon,
My youngeſt born, my darling muſt be ſlain!

MIRIAM.

The helpleſs innocent! and muſt he die?

JOCHÈBED.

No: if a mother's tears, a mother's pray'rs,
A mother's fond precautions can prevail,
He ſhall not die. I have a thought, my Miriam!
And ſure the GOD of mercies, who inſpir'd,
Will bleſs the ſecret purpoſe of my ſoul,
To ſave his precious life.

MIRIAM.

Hop'ſt thou that Pharaoh—

JOCHÈBED.

I have no hope in Pharoah, much in GOD;
Much in the ROCK OF AGES.

MIRIAM.

MIRIAM.

Think, O think,
What perils thou already haſt incurr'd;
And ſhun the greater, which may yet remain.
Three months, three dang'rous months thou haſt
preſerv'd
Thy infant's life, and in thy houſe conceal'd him!
Shou'd Pharaoh know!

JOCHEBED.

Oh! let the tyrant know,
And feel what he inflicts! Yes, hear me, Heav'n!
Send thy right aiming thunderbolts——But huſh,
My impious murmurs! Is it not thy will;
Thou, infinite in mercy? Thou permitt'ſt
This ſeeming evil for ſome latent good.
Yes, I will laud thy grace, and bleſs thy goodneſs
For what I have, and not arraign thy wiſdom
For what I fear to loſe. O, I will bleſs thee,
That Aaron will be ſpar'd! that my firſt born

Lives ſafe and undiſturb'd ! that he was giv'n me
Before this impious perſecution rag'd !

MIRIAM.

And yet who knows, but the fell tyrant's rage
May reach *his* precious life ?

JOCHEBED.

I fear for him,
For thee, for all. A doating parent lives
In many lives; thro' many a nerve ſhe feels;
From child to child the quick affections ſpread,
For ever wand'ring, yet for ever fix'd.
Nor does diviſion weaken, nor the force
Of conſtant operation e'er exhauſt
Parental love. All other paſſions change,
With changing circumſtances; riſe or fall,
Dependant on their object; claim returns;
Live on reciprocation, and expire
Unfed by hope. A mother's fondneſs reigns
Without a rival, and without an end.

MIRIAM.

MIRIAM.

But ſay what Heav'n inſpires to ſave thy ſon?

JOCHÈBED.

Since the dear fatal morn which gave him birth,
I have revolv'd in my diſtracted mind
Each means to ſave his life: and many a thought,
Which fondneſs prompted, prudence has oppos'd
As perilous and raſh. With theſe poor hands
I've fram'd a little ark of ſlender reeds;
With pitch and ſlime I have ſecur'd the ſides.
In this frail cradle I intend to lay
My little helpleſs infant, and expoſe him
Upon the banks of Nile.

MIRIAM.

'Tis full of danger.

JOCHÈBED.

'Tis danger to expoſe, and death to keep him.

MIRIAM.

Yet, Oh! reflect. Shou'd the fierce crocodile,
The native and the tyrant of the NILE,
Seize the defenceleſs infant!

JOCHÈBED.

Oh, forbear!
Spare my fond heart. Yet not the crocodile,
Nor all the deadly monſters of the deep,
To me are half ſo terrible as PHARAOH,
That heathen king, that royal murderer!

MIRIAM.

Shou'd he eſcape, which yet I dare not hope,
Each ſea-born monſter; yet the winds and waves
He cannot 'ſcape.

JOCHÈBED.

Know, GOD is ev'ry where;
Not to one narrow, partial ſpot confin'd;
No,

No, not to choſen ISRAEL: He extends
Thro' all the vaſt infinitude of ſpace.
At his command the furious tempeſts riſe.
The blaſting of the breath of his diſpleaſure:
He tells the world of waters, when to roar;
And at his bidding, winds and ſeas are calm.
In HIM, not in an arm of fleſh, I truſt;
In HIM, whoſe promiſe never yet has fail'd,
I place my confidence.

MIRIAM.

What muſt I do?
Command thy daughter, for thy words have wak'd
An holy boldneſs in my youthful breaſt.

JOCHÈBED.

Go then, my MIRIAM! go, and take the infant.
Buried in harmleſs ſlumbers there he lies:
Let me not ſee him—ſpare my heart that pang.
Yet ſure, one little look may be indulg'd,
One kiſs—perhaps the laſt. No more, my ſoul!

That fondneſs wou'd be fatal—I ſhou'd keep him.
I cou'd not doom to death the babe I claſp'd:
Did ever mother kill her ſleeping boy?
I dare not hazard it—The taſk be thine.
Oh! do not wake my child; remove him ſoftly;
And gently lay him on the river's brink.

MIRIAM.

Did thoſe magicians, whom the ſons of EGYPT
Conſult and think all-potent, join their ſkill,
And was it great as EGYPT's ſons believe;
Yet all their ſecret wizard arts combin'd,
To ſave this little ark of Bulruſhes,
Thus fearfully expos'd, cou'd not effect it.
Their ſpells, their incantations, and dire charms
Cou'd not preſerve it.

JOCHÈBED.

Know, this ark is charm'd
With ſpells, which impious EGYPT never knew;
With invocations to the living GOD,

I twiſted

I twiſted every ſlender reed together,
And with a pray'r did every ozier weave.

MIRIAM.

I go.

JOCHÈBED.

Yet e'er thou go'ſt, obſerve me well.
When thou haſt laid him in his wat'ry bed,
O leave him not; but at a diſtance wait,
And mark what Heaven's high will determines for him.
Lay him among the flags on yonder beach,
Juſt where the royal gardens meet the Nile.
I dare not follow him, Suſpicion's eye
Wou'd note my wild demeanor; MIRIAM, yes,
The mother's fondneſs wou'd betray the child.
Farewell! GOD of my fathers, Oh protect him!

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

PART II.

SCENE, on the Banks of the NILE.

Enter MIRIAM, *after having depoſited the child.*

YES, I have laid him in his wat'ry bed,
His wat'ry grave, I fear!—I tremble ſtill;
It was a cruel taſk—ſtill I muſt weep!
But ah! my mother, who ſhall ſooth thy griefs?
The flags and ſea-weeds will awhile ſuſtain
Their precious load, but it muſt ſink ére long!
Sweet babe, farewell! Yet think not I will leave thee;
No, I will watch thee, till the greedy waves
Devour

Devour thy little bark: I'll ſit me down,
And ſing to thee, ſweet babe! Thou can'ſt not hear;
But 'twill amuſe me, while I watch thy fate.

[*She ſits down on a bank, and ſings.*

SONG.

I.

THOU, who canſt make the feeble ſtrong,
O GOD of Iſrael, hear my ſong!
Not mine ſuch notes as Egypt's daughters raiſe;
'Tis thee, O GOD of Hoſts, I ſtrive to praiſe.

II.

Ye winds, the ſervants of the LORD,
Ye waves, obedient to his word,
O ſpare the babe committed to your truſt;
And Iſrael ſhall confeſs, the LORD is juſt!

III.

III.

Tho' doom'd to find an early grave,
This helpleſs infant thou canſt ſave;
And he, whoſe death's decreed by Pharaoh's hand,
May riſe a prophet to redeem the land.
[*She riſes, and looks out.*

Who moves this way? of royal port ſhe ſeems;
Perhaps ſent thither by the hand of Heaven,
To prop the falling houſe of Levi.—Soft!
I'll liſten unperceiv'd, theſe trees will hide me.
[*She ſtands behind.*

Enter the PRINCESS of EGYPT, *attended by a train of Ladies.*

PRINCESS.

No farther, Virgins; here I mean to reſt,
To taſte the pleaſant coolneſs of the breeze;

Perhaps

Perhaps to bathe in this tranſlucent ſtream.
Did not our holy law * enjoin th' ablution
Frequent and regular; it ſtill were needful,
To mitigate the fervors of our clime.
MELITA, ſtay—the reſt at diſtance wait.

[*They all go out, except one.*

The PRINCESS *looks out.*

Sure, or I much miſtake, or I perceive
Upon the ſedgy margin of the Nile
A cheſt; entangled in the reeds it ſeems:
Diſcern'ſt thou ought?

MELITA.

Something, but what I know not.

PRINCESS.

Go and examine, what this ſight may mean.

[*Exit Maid.*

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* The antient Egyptians uſed to waſh their bodies four times every twenty-four hours.

MIRIAM.

MIRIAM, *behind.*

O bleſt, beyond my hopes! he is diſcover'd;
My brother will be ſav'd! who is this ſtranger?
Ah! 'tis the Princeſs, cruel Pharaoh's daughter.
If ſhe reſemble her inhuman Sire,
She muſt be cruel too; yet fame reports her
Moſt merciful and mild:—I'll mark th' event,
And pray that Heav'n may prompt her to preſerve him.

Re-enter MELITA.

PRINCESS.

Haſt thou diſcover'd what the veſſel is?

MELITA.

Oh, Princeſs, I have ſeen the ſtrangeſt ſight!
Within the veſſel lies a ſleeping babe,
A fairer infant have I never ſeen!

PRINCESS.

Who knows, but ſome unhappy Hebrew woman
Has thus expos'd her infant, to evade

The

The ſtern decree of my too cruel Sire.
Unhappy mothers! oft my heart has bled
In ſecret anguiſh o'er your ſlaughter'd ſons.

MELITA.

Shou'd this be one, my Princeſs knows the danger.

PRINCESS.

No danger ſhou'd deter from acts of mercy.

MIRIAM, *behind.*

A thouſand bleſſings on her princely head!

PRINCESS.

Too much the ſons of Jacob have endur'd
From royal Pharaoh's unrelenting hate;
Too much our houſe has cruſh'd their alien race
Is't not enough, that cruel taſk-maſters
Grind them by hard oppreſſion and ſtern bondage?
Is't not enough, my father owes his greatneſs,
His palaces, his fanes magnificent;
Thoſe ſtructures which the world with wonder views,

To

To the hard toils of much inſulted Iſrael?
To them his growing cities owe their ſplendor,
Their labours built fair Rameſes and Pythom;
And now, at length his ſtill increaſing rage
To iron bondage adds the guilt of murder.
And ſhall this little helpleſs infant periſh?
Forbid it, juſtice; and forbid it, heav'n!

MELITA.

I know, thy royal father fears the ſtrength
Of this ſtill growing race, who flouriſh more
The more they are oppreſs'd; he dreads their numbers.

PRINCESS.

Apis forbid! Pharaoh afraid of Iſrael;
Yet ſhou'd this outcaſt race, this hapleſs people
E'er grow to ſuch a formidable greatneſs;
(Which all the gods avert, whom Egypt worſhips)
This infant's life can never ſerve their cauſe,
Nor can his ſingle death prevent their greatneſs.

MELITA.

MELITA.

I know not that: by weakeſt inſtruments
Sometimes are great events produc'd; this child
Perhaps may live to ſerve his upſtart race
More than an hoſt.

PRINCESS.

How ill does it beſeem
Thy tender years, and gentle womanhood,
To ſteel thy breaſt to pity's ſacred touch!
So weak, ſo unprotected is our ſex,
So conſtantly expos'd, ſo very helpleſs;
That did not Heav'n itſelf enjoin compaſſion,
Yet human policy ſhou'd make us kind,
Leſt we ſhould need the pity we refuſe.
Yes, I will ſave him——lead me to the place;
And from the feeble ruſhes we'll remove
The little ark, which cradles this poor babe.

[*The* PRINCESS *and her Maid go out.*

MIRIAM.

MIRIAM *comes forward.*

How poor were words, to ſpeak my boundleſs joy!
The Princeſs will protect him; bleſs her, Heav'n!
[*She looks out after the Princeſs, and deſcribes her action.*

With what impatient ſteps ſhe ſeeks the ſhore!
Now ſhe approaches where the ark is laid!
With what compaſſion, with what angel-ſweetneſs,
She bends to kook upon the infant's face!
She takes his little hand in her's—he wakes—
She ſmiles upon him— hark! alas, he cries;
Weep on, ſweet babe! weep on, till thou haſt touch'd
Each chord of pity, waken'd every ſenſe
Of melting ſympathy, and ſtolen her ſoul!
She takes him in her arms—O lovely Princeſs!
How goodneſs heightens beauty! now ſhe claſps him
With fondneſs to her heart, ſhe give him now
With tender caution to her damſel's arms:
She points her to the palace, and again

This

This way the Princeſs bends her gracious ſteps;
The virgin-train retire, and bear the child.

Re-enter the PRINCESS.

PRINCESS.

Did ever innocence and infant beauty
Plead with ſuch dumb but powerful eloquence?
If I, a ſtranger, feel theſe ſoft emotions,
What muſt the mother who expos'd him feel!
Go, fetch a woman of the Hebrew race,
That ſhe may nurſe the babe; and, by her garb,
Lo ſuch a one is here!

MIRIAM.

Princeſs, all hail!
Forgive the bold intruſion of thy ſervant,
Who ſtands a charm'd ſpectator of thy goodneſs.

PRINCESS.

I have redeem'd an infant from the waves,
Whom I intend to nurture as mine own.

MIRIAM.

My tranſports will betray me! [*Aſide*] Gen'rous
Princeſs!

PRINCESS.

Know'ſt thou a matron of the Hebrew race,
To whom I may confide him?

MIRIAM.

Well I know
A prudent matron of the houſe of Levi;
Her name Jochèbed is, the wife of Amram;
Gentle ſhe is, and fam'd throughout her tribe
For ſoft humanity; full well I know
That ſhe will rear him with a mother's love.
[*Aſide*] Oh truly ſpoke! a mother's love indeed!
To her deſpairing arms I mean to give
This precious truſt; the nurſe ſhall be the mother!

PRINCESS.

With ſpeed conduct this matron to the palace.
Yes, I will raiſe him up to princely greatneſs,
And

And he ſhall be my ſon; his name be *Moſes*,
For I have drawn him from the perilous flood.

[*They go out. She kneels.*

Thou Great Unſeen! who cauſeſt gentle deeds,
And ſmil'ſt on what thou cauſeſt; thus I bleſs thee;
That thou didſt deign conſult the tender make
Of yielding human hearts, when thou ordain'd'ſt
Humanity a virtue! Did'ſt incline
The nat'ral bias of the ſoul to mercy,
Then mad'ſt that mercy duty! Gracious Pow'r!
Mad'ſt the keen rapture exquiſite as right:
Beyond the joys of ſenſe; as pleaſure ſweet;
As reaſon conſtant, and as inſtinct ſtrong!

MOSES IN THE BULRUSHES:

PART III.

Enter JOCHÈBED.

I'VE almoſt reach'd the place—with cautious ſteps
I muſt approach to where the ark is laid,
Leſt from the royal gardens any ſpy me.
—Poor babe! ere this, the preſſing calls of hunger
Have broke thy ſhort repoſe; the chilling waves,
Perhaps, have drench'd thy little ſhiv'ring limbs.
What--what muſt he have ſuffer'd!--No one ſees me,
But ſoft, does no one liſten?—Ah! how hard,
How very hard for fondneſs to be prudent!
Now is the moment, to embrace and feed him.

[*She looks out.*

Where's

Where's Miriam? ſhe has left her little charge,
Perhaps through fear, perhaps ſhe was detected.
How wild is thought! how terrible conjecture!
A mother's fondneſs frames a thouſand fears,
And ſhapes unreal evils into being.

[*She looks towards the river.*

Ah me! where is he? ſoul-diſtracting ſight!
He is not there—he's loſt, he's gone, he's drown'd!
Toſs'd by each beating ſurge my infant floats;
Cold, cold and wat'ry is thy grave, my child!
O no—I ſee the ark—Tranſporting ſight;

[*She goes towards it.*

What do I ſee? Alas, the ark is empty!
The caſket's left, the precious gem is gone!
You ſpar'd him, pitying ſpirits of the deep!
But vain your mercy; ſome inſatiate beaſt,
Cruel as Pharaoh, took the life you ſpar'd—
And I ſhall never, never ſee him more!

Enter MIRIAM.

JOCHÈBED.

Come, and lament with me thy brother's loſs!

MIRIAM.

Come, and adore with me the God of Jacob!

JOCHÈBED.

Miriam—the child is dead!

MIRIAM.

He lives, he lives!

JOCHÈBED.

Impoſſible: Oh! do not mock my grief!
See'ſt thou that empty veſſel?

MIRIAM.

From that veſſel
Th' Egyptian Princeſs took him.

JOCHÈBED.

JOCHÉBED.

Pharaoh's daughter?
Then ſtill he will be ſlain.

MIRIAM.

His life is ſafe;
For know, ſhe means to rear him as her own.

JOCHÈBED.

[*Falls on her knees in rapture.*

To GOD, the Lord, the glory be aſcrib'd!
O magnified for ever be thy might,
Who can'ſt plant mercy in a Heathen's heart,
And from the depth of evil bring forth good!

[*She riſes.*

MIRIAM.

O bleſt event, beyond our warmeſt hopes:

JOCHÈBED.

What! ſhall my ſon be nurtur'd in a court,
In princely grandeur bred? taught every art,
And every wond'rous ſcience Egypt knows?

Yet ah! I tremble, Miriam; ſhou'd he learn,
With Egypt's poliſh'd arts, her baneful faith!
O worſe exchange for death! Yes, ſhou'd he learn
In yon' proud palace to diſown *his* hand
Who thus has ſav'd him: ſhou'd he e'er embrace
(As ſure he will, if bred in Pharaoh's court)
The groſs idolatries which Egypt owns,
Her graven images, her brutiſh gods:
Then ſhall I wiſh he had not been preſerv'd,
To ſhame his fathers, and deny his faith.

MIRIAM.

Then, to diſpel thy fears, and crown thy joy,
Hear farther wonders—Know the gen'rous Princeſs
To thine own care thy darling child commits.

JOCHÈBED.

Speak, while my joy will give me leave to liſten!

MIRIAM.

By her commiſſion'd, thou behold'ſt me here,
To ſeek a matron of the Hebrew race

To

To nurſe him; thou, my mother, art that matron.—
I ſaid, I knew thee well; that thou would'ſt rear him
Ev'n with a mother's fondneſs; ſhe, who bare him,
(I told the Princeſs) could not love him more.

JOCHÈBED.

Fountain of Mercy! whoſe pervading eye
Beholds the heart, and reads what paſſes there,
Accept my thoughts for thanks! I have no words—
How poor were human language to expreſs
My gratitude, my wonder, and my joy!

MIRIAM.

Yes, thou ſhalt pour into his infant mind
The pureſt precepts of the pureſt faith.

JOCHÈBED.

O! I will fill his tender ſoul with virtue,
And warm his boſom with devotion's flame!
Aid me, celeſtial Spirit! with thy grace,
And be my labours with thy influence crown'd:
Without it they were vain. Then, then, my Miriam,

When

When he is furniſh'd, 'gainſt the evil day,
With GOD's whole armour*, girt with ſacred truth,
And as a breaſt-plate, wearing righteouſneſs,
Arm'd with the ſpirit of God, the ſhield of Faith,
And with the helmet of ſalvation crown'd,
Inur'd to watching, and diſpos'd to pray'r ;
Then may I ſend him to a dangerous court,
And ſafely truſt him in a perilous world,
Too full of tempting ſnares and fond deluſions !

MIRIAM.

May bounteous Heav'n thy pious cares reward !

JOCHÈBED.

O Amram ! O my huſband ! when thou com'ſt,
Wearied at night, to reſt thee from the toils
Impos'd by haughty Pharaoh ; what a tale
Have I to tell thee ! yes—thy darling ſon
Was loſt, and is reſtor'd ; was dead, and lives !

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* 2 Theſſ. chap. v. Alſo, Epheſ. chap. vi.

MIRIAM.

How joyful ſhall we ſpend the live-long night
In praiſes to JEHOVAH; who thus mocks
All human foreſight, and converts the means
Of ſeeming ruin into great deliverance!

JOCHÈBED.

Had not my child been doom'd to ſuch ſtrange perils,
As a fond mother trembles to recal;
He had not been preſerv'd.

MIRIAM.

And mark ſtill farther:
Had he been ſav'd by any other hand,
He had been ſtill expos'd to equal ruin.

JOCHÈBED.

Then let us join to bleſs the hand of Heav'n,
That this poor outcaſt of the houſe of Iſrael,
Condemn'd to die by Pharaoh, kept in ſecret
By my advent'rous fondneſs; then expos'd

Ev'n

Ev'n by that very fondneſs which conceal'd him,
Is now, to fill the wond'rous round of mercy,
Preſerv'd from periſhing by Pharaoh's daughter,
Sav'd by the very hand which ſought to cruſh him!

Wiſe and unſearchable are all thy ways,
Thou GOD of MERCIES!—Lead me to my child!

THE END.

DAVID AND GOLIATH:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

O bienheureux mille fois,
L'Enfant que le Seigneur aime,
Qui de bonne heure entend ſa voix,
Et que ce Dieu daigne inſtruire lui-même!
Loin du monde élevé ; de tous les dons des Cieux,
Ill eſt orné dès ſa naiſſance ;
Et du méchant l'abord contagieux
N'alteré point ſon innocence.

ATHALIE.

PERSONS of the DRAMA.

SAUL, King of Israel.
ABNER, his General.
JESSE.
ELIAB,
ABINADAB, } Sons of Jesse.
DAVID,
GOLIATH, the Philistine Giant.
Philistines, Israelites, &c. &c.

Chorus of Hebrew Women.

The SCENE lies in the Camp, in the Valley of Elah, and the adjacent Plain.

☞ The ſubject of this Drama is taken from the Seventeenth Chapter of the Firſt Book of Samuel.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART I.

SCENE, a Shepherd's Tent on a Plain.

DAVID, *under a ſpreading tree, plays on his harp, and ſings.*

I.

GREAT Lord of all things! Pow'r divine!
Breathe on this erring heart of mine
Thy grace ſerene and pure;
Defend my frail, my erring youth,
And teach me this important truth,
The humble are ſecure.

II. Teach

II.

Teach me to bleſs my lowly lot
Confin'd to this paternal cot,
Remote from regal ſtate!
Content to court the cooling glade,
Inhale the breeze, enjoy the ſhade,
And love my humble fate.

III.

No anxious vigils here I keep,
No dreams of gold diſtract my ſleep,
Nor lead my heart aſtray;
Nor blaſting Envy's tainted gale
Pollutes the pleaſures of the vale,
To vex my harmleſs day.

IV.

Yon' tow'r, which rears its head ſo high,
And bids defiance to the ſky,

Invites

Invites the hoſtile winds:
Yon' branching oak extending wide,
Provokes deſtruction by its pride,
And courts the fall it finds.

V.

Then let me ſhun th' ambitious deed,
And all the dangerous paths which lead
To honours falſely won:
Lord! in thy ſure protection bleſt,
Submiſſive will I ever reſt,
And may thy will be done!

[*He lays down his harp, and riſes.*

DAVID.

This Shepherd's life were dull and taſteleſs all,
Without the charm of ſoothing ſong or harp:
With it, not undelightful is the haunt
Of wood, or lonely grove, or ruſſet plain,
Made vocal by the muſe. With this lov'd harp,
This daily ſolace of my cares I ſooth'd

The melancholy monarch, when he lay,
Smit by the chill and ſpirit-quenching hand
Of blank deſpair. GOD of my fathers! hear me:
Here I devote my harp, my verſe, myſelf,
To thy bleſt ſervice! gladly to proclaim
Glory to GOD on high, on earth good-will
To man; to pour my grateful ſoul before thee;
To ſing thy pow'r, thy wiſdom, and thy love,
And every gracious attribute: to paint
The charms of heav'n born virtue! So ſhall I,
(Tho' with long interval of worth) aſpire
To imitate the work of ſaints above,
Of Cherub and of Seraphim. My heart,
My talents, all I am, and all I have,
Is thine, O Father! Gracious LORD, accept
The humble dedication: Offer'd gifts
Of ſlaughter'd bulls, and goats ſacrifical,
Thou haſt refus'd: but lo! I come, O LORD,
To do thy will! the living ſacrifice
Of an obedient heart I lay before thee;
This humble offering more ſhall pleaſe thee, LORD!

Than

Than horned bullocks, ceremonial rites,
New moons, appointed paſſovers, and faſts!
Yet thoſe I too will keep; but not inſtead
Of holineſs ſubſtantial, inward worth;
As commutation cheap for pious deeds,
And purity of life: But as the types
Of better things; as fair external ſigns
Of inward holineſs and ſecret truth.

But ſee, my father, good old Jeſſe comes!
To cheer the ſetting evening of whoſe life,
Content, a ſimple ſhepherd here I dwell,
Tho' Iſrael is in arms; and royal Saul,
Encamp'd in yonder field, defies Philiſtia.

JESSE, DAVID.

JESSE.

Bleſt be the gracious Pow'r, who gave my age
To boaſt a ſon like thee! Thou art the ſtaff
Which props my bending years, and makes me bear

The heavy burthen of declining age
With fond complacence. How unlike thy fate,
O venerable Eli! But two ſons
But only two, to gild the dim remains
Of life's departing day, and bleſs thy age,
And both were curſes to thee! Witneſs, Heav'n!
In all the cruel catalogue of pains
Humanity turns o'er, if there be one
So terrible to human tenderneſs,
As an unnatural child!

DAVID.

O, my lov'd father!
Long mayſt thou live, in years and honours rich;
To taſte, and to communicate the joys,
The thouſand fond, endearing charities
Of tenderneſs domeſtic; Nature's beſt
And lovelieſt gift, with which ſhe well atones
The niggard boon of fortune.

JESSE.

JESSE.

O, my ſon!
Of all the graces which adorn thy youth,
I, with a father's fondneſs, muſt commend
Thy tried humility. For tho' the Seer
Pour'd on thy choſen head the ſacred oil,
In ſign of future greatneſs, in ſure pledge
Of higheſt dignity; yet here thou dwell'ſt,
Content with toil, and careleſs of repoſe;
And (harder ſtill for an ingenuous mind)
Content to be obſcure: content to watch,
With careful eye, thine humble father's flock!
O, earthly emblem of celeſtial things!
So Iſrael's ſhepherd watches o'er his fold:
The weak one's in his foſt'ring boſom bears;
And gently leads, in his ſuſtaining hand,
The feeble ones with young.

DAVID.

Know'ſt thou, my father,
Ought from the field? for tho' ſo near the camp,

Tho' war's proud enſigns ſtream on yonder plain,
And all Philiſtia's ſwarming hoſts encamp,
Oppos'd to royal Saul, beneath whoſe banners,
My brothers lift the ſpear ; I have not left
My fleecy charge, by thee committed to me,
To learn the preſent fortune of the war.

JESSE.

And wiſely haſt thou done. Thrice happy realm,
Who ſhall ſubmit one day to his command
Who can ſo well obey ! Obedience leads
To certain honours. Not the tow'ring wing
Of eagle-plum'd Ambition mounts ſo ſurely
To Fortune's higheſt ſummit, as Obedience.
[*A diſtant ſound of trumpets.*
But why that ſudden ardour, O my ſon ?
That trumpet's ſound (tho' ſo remote its voice,
We hardly catch the echo as it dies)
Has rous'd the mantling crimſon in thy cheek :
Kindled the martial ſpirit in thine eye,
And my young ſhepherd feels an hero's fire !

DAVID.

DAVID.

Thou haſt not told the poſture of the war,
And much my beating boſom pants to hear.

JESSE.

Uncertain is the fortune of the field.
I tremble for thy brothers, thus expos'd
To conſtant peril; nor for them alone,
Does the quick feeling agonize my heart.
I too lament, that deſolating war
Hangs his fell banner o'er my native land,
Belov'd Jeruſalem! O war, what art thou?
After the brighteſt conqueſt, what remains
Of all thy glories? For the vanquiſh'd chains!
For the proud victor, what? alas! to reign
O'er deſolated nations! a drear waſte,
By one man's crime, by one man's luſt of pow'r,
Unpeopled! Naked plains and ravag'd fields
Succeed to ſmiling harveſts, and the fruits
Of peaceful olive, luſcious fig and vine!

Here, rifled temples are the cavern'd dens
Of ſavage beaſts, or haunt of birds obſcene.
There, populous cities blacken in the ſun,
And, in the gen'ral wreck, proud palaces
Lie undiſtinguiſh'd, ſave by the dun ſmoke
Of recent conflagration. When the ſong
Of dear-bought joy, with many a triumph ſwell'd,
Salutes the victor's ear, and ſooths his pride;
How is the grateful harmony profan'd
With the ſad diſſonance of virgins' cries,
Who mourn their brothers ſlain! Of matrons hoar,
Who claſp their wither'd hands, and fondly aſk,
With iteration ſhrill, their ſlaughter'd ſons!
How is the laurel's verdure ſtain'd with blood,
And ſoil'd with widows' tears!

DAVID.

Thrice mournful truth!
Yet when our country's rights her ſacred laws,
Her holy faith are ſcorn'd and trampled on,
Then, then religion calls; then God himſelf
Commands

Commands us to defend his injur'd name.
'Twere then inglorious weakneſs, mean ſelf-love,
To lie inactive, when the ſtirring voice
Of the ſhrill trumpet wakes to deſp'rate deeds;
Nor with heroic valour boldly dare
Th' idolatrous heathen bands, ev'n to the death.

JESSE.

God and thy country claim the life they gave,
No other cauſe can ſanctify reſentment.

DAVID.

Sure virtuous friendſhip is a noble cauſe!
O were the princely Jonathan in danger,
How wou'd I die, well-pleas'd in his defence!
When, 'twas long ſince, then but a ſtripling boy
I made ſhort ſojourn in his father's palace,
(At firſt to ſooth his troubled mind with ſong,
His armour bearer next;) I well remember
The gracious bounties of the gallant prince,
How wou'd he ſit, attentive to my ſtrain;

While

While to my harp I ſung the harmleſs joys,
Which crown a ſhepherd's life! How wou'd he cry,
Bleſs'd youth! far happier in thy native worth,
Far richer in the talent Heav'n has lent thee,
Than if a crown hung o'er thy anxious brow.
The jealous monarch mark'd our growing friendſhip;
And as my favour grew with thoſe about him,
His royal bounty leſſen'd, till at length,
For Bethl'hem's ſafer ſhades I left the court.
Nor wou'd theſe alter'd features now be known,
Grown into manly ſtrength; nor this chang'd form,
Enlarg'd with age, and clad in ruſſet weed.

JESSE.

I have employment for thee, my lov'd ſon,
Will pleaſe thy active ſpirit. Go, my boy!
Haſte to the field of war, to yonder camp,
Where, in the vale of Elah, mighty Saul
Commands the hoſts of Iſrael. Greet thy brothers:
Obſerve their deeds; note their demeanor well;
And mark if wiſdom on their actions waits.

Bear

Bear to them too (for well the waſte of war
Will make it needful) ſuch plain healthful viands,
As furniſh out our frugal ſhepherd's meal.
And to the valiant captain of their hoſt,
Preſent ſuch rural gifts as ſuit our fortune.
Heap'd on the board within my tent thoul't find them.

DAVID.

With joy I'll bear thy preſents to my brothers;
And to the valiant captain of their hoſt,
The rural gifts thy gratitude aſſigns him.
What tranſport to behold the tented field,
The pointed ſpear, the blaze of ſhields and arms,
And all the proud accoutrements of war!
But, oh! far dearer tranſport wou'd it yield me,
Cou'd this right arm alone avenge the cauſe
Of injur'd Iſrael, and preſerve the lives
Of guiltleſs thouſands, doom'd perhaps to bleed!

JESSE.

Let not thy youth be dazzled, O my ſon!
With deeds of bold emprize, as valour only

Were

Were virtue; and the gentle arts of peace,
Of truth and juſtice, were not worth thy care.
When thou ſhalt view the ſplendors of the war,
The gay capariſon, the burniſh'd ſhield,
The plume-crown'd helmet, and the glitt'ring ſpear,
Scorn not the humble virtues of the ſhade;
Nor think that Heav'n views only with applauſe
The active merit and the buſy toil
Of heroes, ſtateſmen, and the buſtling ſons
Of public care. Theſe have their juſt reward
In wealth, in honours, and the well-earn'd fame
Their high atchievements bring. 'Tis in this view,
That virtue is her proper recompence.
Wealth, as its natural conſequence, will flow
From induſtry; toil with ſucceſs is crown'd:
From ſplendid actions high renown will ſpring.
Such is the uſual courſe of human things,
For Wiſdom Infinite permits, that thus
Effects to cauſes be proportionate,
And nat'ral ends by nat'ral means atchiev'd.
But in the future eſtimate, which Heav'n

Will

Will make of things terreſtrial, know, my ſon,
That no inferior bleſſing is reſerv'd
For the mild *paſſive* virtues; meek Content,
Heroic Self-denial, nobler far
Than all th' atchievements noiſy Fame reports,
When her ſhrill trump proclaims the proud ſucceſs
Which deſolates the nations. But, on earth,
Theſe are not always fortunate; becauſe
Eternal Juſtice keeps them for the bliſs
Of final recompence, for the dread day
Of gen'ral retribution. O my ſon!
The oſtentatious virtues, which ſtill preſs
For notice, and for praiſe; the brilliant deeds,
Which live but in the eye of obſervation,
Theſe have their meed at once. But there's a joy,
To the fond votaries of Fame unknown;
To hear the ſtill ſmall voice of conſcience ſpeak
It's whiſp'ring plaudit to the ſilent ſoul.
Heav'n notes the ſigh afflicted Goodneſs heaves;
Hears the low plaint by human ear unhear'd,

And

And from the cheek of patient Sorrow wipes
The tear, by mortal eye unſeen or ſcorn'd.

DAVID.

As Hermon's dews their grateful freſhneſs ſhed,
And cheer the herbage, and the flow'rs renew;
So do thy words a quick'ning balm infuſe,
And grateful ſink in my delighted ſoul.

JESSE.

Go then, my child! and may the gracious GOD,
Who bleſs'd our fathers, bleſs my much-lov'd ſon!

DAVID.

Farewell, my father! and of this be ſure,
That not a precept from thy honour'd lips
Shall fall, by me unnotic'd; not one grace,
One venerable virtue, which adorns
Thy daily life, but I, with watchful care,
And due obſervance, will in mine tranſplant it.

[*Exit* DAVID.

JESSE.

JESSE.

He's gone! and ſtill my aching eyes purſue,
And ſtrain their orbs ſtill longer to behold him.
Oh! who can tell, when I may next embrace
him?
Who can declare the counſels of the Lord?
Or when the moment, pre-ordain'd by Heav'n
To fill his great deſigns, may come? This ſon,
This bleſſing of my age, is ſet apart
For high exploits; the choſen inſtrument
Of all-diſpoſing Heav'n for mighty deeds.
Still I recal the the day, and to my mind
The ſcene is ever preſent; when the Seer,
Illuſtrious Samuel, to the humble ſhades
Of Bethlehem came, pretending ſacrifice,
To ſcreen his errand from the jealous king.
He ſanctify'd us firſt, me, and my ſons;
For ſanctity increas'd ſhould ſtill precede
Increaſe of dignity. When he declar'd
He came, commiſſion'd from bn High, to find,
Among the ſons of Jeſſe, Iſrael's king!

Aſtoniſhment

Aſtoniſhment entranc'd my wond'ring ſoul.
Yet was it not a wild, tumultuous bliſs;
Such raſh delight as promis'd honours yield
To light, vain minds: no, 'twas a doubtful joy
Chaſtis'd by tim'rous virtue, left a gift
So ſplendid, and ſo dang'rous, might deſtroy
Him it was meant to raiſe. My eldeſt born,
Young Eliab, tall of ſtature, I preſented;
But God, who judges not by outward form,
But tries the heart, forbad the holy prophet
To chuſe my eldeſt born. For Saul, he ſaid,
Gave proof, that fair proportion, and the grace
Of limb or feature, ill repaid the want
Of virtue. All my other ſons alike
By Samuel were rejected: till, at laſt,
On my young boy, on David's choſen head,
The prophet pour'd the conſecrated oil.
Yet ne'er did pride elate him, ne'er did ſcorn
For his rejected elders ſwell his heart.
Not in ſuch gentle charity to him
His haughtier brother's live: but all he pardons.

To meditation, and to humble toil,
To pray'r, and praiſe devoted, here he dwells.
O may the Graces which adorn retreat,
One day delight a court! record his name
With ſaints and prophets, dignify his race,
Inſtruct mankind, and ſanctify a world!

DAVID AND GOLIATH:

PART II.

SCENE, The CAMP.

ELIAB, ABINADAB, ABNER, ISRAELITES.

ELIAB.

STILL is th' event of this long war uncertain:
Still do the adverſe hoſts, on either ſide,
Protract, with ling'ring caution, an encounter,
Which muſt to one be fatal.

ABINADAB.

This deſcent,
Thus to the very confines of our land,
Proclaims

Proclaims the ſanguine hope that fires the foe.
In Ephes-dammim boldly they encamp:
Th' uncircumcis'd Philiſtines pitch their tents
On Judah's hallow'd earth.

ELIAB.

Full forty days
Has the inſulting giant, proud Goliath,
The champion of Philiſtia, fiercely challeng'd
Some Iſraelitiſh foe. But who ſo vain
To dare ſuch force unequal? who ſo bent
On ſure deſtruction, to accept his terms;
And ruſh on death, beneath the giant force
Of his enormous bulk?

ABINADAB,

'Tis near the time,
When, in th' adjacent valley which divides
Th' oppoſing armies, he is wont to make
His daily challenge.

ELIAB.

Much I marvel, brother!
No greetings from our father reach our ears.
With eaſe and plenty bleſs'd, he little recks
The daily hardſhips which his ſons endure.
But ſee! behold his darling boy approaches!

ABINADAB.

How, David here? whence this unlook'd-for gueſt?

ELIAB.

A ſpy upon our actions; ſent, no doubt,
To ſcan our deeds, with beardleſs gravity
Affecting wiſdom; to obſerve each word,
To magnify the venial faults of youth,
And conſtrue harmleſs mirth to foul offence.

Enter DAVID.

DAVID.

All hail, my deareſt brothers!

ELIAB.

ELIAB.

Means thy greeting
True love, or arrogant ſcorn?

DAVID.

Oh, moſt true love!
Sweet as the precious ointment, which bedew'd
The ſacred head of Aaron, and deſcended
Upon his hallow'd veſt; ſo ſweet, my brothers,
Is fond fraternal amity; ſuch love
As my touch'd boſom feels at your approach.

ELIAB.

Still that fine glozing ſpeech, thoſe holy ſaws,
And all that trick of ſtudied ſanctity,
Of ſmooth-turn'd periods, and trim eloquence,
Which charms thy doating father. But confeſs,
What doſt thou here? Is it to ſoothe thy pride,
And gratify thy vain deſire to roam,
In queſt of pleaſures unallow'd? or com'ſt thou,
A willing ſpy, to note thy brother's deeds?
Where haſt thou left thoſe few poor ſtraggling
ſheep?

More ſuited to thy ignorance and years
The care of thoſe, than here to wander idly.
Why cam'ſt thou hither?

DAVID.

Is there not a cauſe?
Why that diſpleaſure kindling in thine eye,
My angry brother? why thoſe taunts unkind?
Not idly bent on ſport; not to delight
Mine eye with all this gay parade of war;
To gratify a roving appetite,
Or fondly to indulge a curious ear
With any tale of rumour, am I come:
But to approve myſelf a loving brother.
I bring the bleſſing of your aged ſire,
With gifts of ſuch plain cates, and rural viands,
As ſuit his frugal fortune. Tell me now,
Where the bold captain of your hoſt encamps?

ELIAB.

Wherefore enquire? what boots it thee to know?
Behold him there: great Abner, fam'd in arms.

DAVID.

DAVID.

I bring thee, mighty Abner, from my father,
A ſimple ſhepherd ſwain in yonder vale,
Such humble gifts as ſhepherd ſwains beſtow.

ABNER.

Thanks, gentle youth! with pleaſure I receive
The grateful off'ring. Why does thy quick eye
Thus wander with unſatisfied delight?

DAVID.

New as I am to all the trade of war,
Each ſound has novelty; each thing I ſee
Attracts attention; every noiſe I hear
Awakes confus'd emotions; indiſtinct,
Yet full of charming tumult, ſweet diſtraction.
'Tis all delightful hurry! Oh! the joy
Of young ideas painted on the mind,
In the warm glowing colours fancy ſpreads
On objects not yet known, when all is new,
And all is lovely! Ah! what warlike ſound
Salutes my raviſh'd ear? [*Sound of trumpet.*

ABNER.

'Tis the Philiſtine,
Proclaiming, by his herald, through the ranks,
His near approach. Each morning he repeats
His challenge to our bands.

DAVID.

Ha! what Philiſtine;
Who is he?

ELIAB.

Wherefore aſk? for thy raw youth,
And ruſtic ignorance, 'twere fitter learn
Some rural art! ſome ſecret to prevent
Contagion in thy flocks; ſome better means
To ſave their fleece immaculate. Theſe mean arts,
Of ſoft inglorious peace, far better ſuit
Thy low obſcurity, than thus to ſeek
High things, pertaining to exploits of arms.

DAVID.

Urg'd as I am, I will not anſwer thee.
Who conquers his own ſpirit, O my brother!

He

He is the only conquerer.—Again
That ſhout myſterious! Pray you, tell me who
This proud Philiſtine is, who ſends defiance
To Iſrael's hardy chieftains?

ABNER.

Stranger youth!
So lovely and ſo mild is thy demeanor,
So gentle, and ſo patient; ſuch the air
Of candor and of courage, which adorns
Thy blooming features, thou haſt won my love;
And I will tell thee.

DAVID.

Mighty Abner! thanks!

ABNER.

Thrice, and no more, he ſounds, his daily rule.
This man of war, this champion of Philiſtia,
Is of the ſons of Anak's giant-race.
Goliath is his name. His fearful ſtature,
Unparallel'd in Iſrael, meaſures more
Than twice three cubits. On his tow'ring head
A helm

A helm of burniſh'd braſs the giant wears,
So pond'rous, it wou'd cruſh the ſtouteſt man
In all our hoſts. A coat of mailed armour
Guards his capacious trunk; compar'd with which
The ampleſt oak, that ſpreads his rugged arms
In Baſhan's groves, were ſmall. About his neck
A ſhining corſlet hangs. On his vaſt thigh
The plaited cuiraſs, firmly jointed, ſtands.
But who ſhall tell the wonders of his ſpear,
And hope to gain belief? of maſſive iron
Its temper'd frame; not leſs than the broad beam
To which the buſy weaver hangs his loom;
Not to be wielded by a mortal hand,
Save by his own. An armour-bearer walks
Before this mighty champion, in his hand
Bearing the giant's ſhield. Thrice, every morn,
His herald ſounds the trumpet of defiance;
Off'ring at once to end the long-drawn war,
In ſingle combat, 'gainſt that hardy foe
Who dares encounter him.

DAVID.

DAVID.

Say, mighty Abner!
What are the haughty terms of his defiance?

ABNER.

Proudly he ſtalks around th' extremeſt bounds
Of Elah's valley. His herald ſounds the note
Of offer'd battle. Then the furious giant,
With ſuch a voice as from the troubled ſky,
In vollied thunder, breaks, thus ſends his challenge:
"Why do you ſet your battle in array,
Ye men of Iſrael? Wherefore waſte the lives
Of needleſs thouſands? Why protract a war,
Which may at once be ended? Are not you
Servants to Saul your king? and am not I,
With triumph let me ſpeak it, a Philiſtine?
Chuſe out a man from all your armed hoſts,
Of courage moſt approv'd; and I will meet him,
His ſingle arm to mine. Th' event of this
Shall fix the fate of Iſrael and Philiſtia.

If

If victory favour him, then will we live
Your tributary ſlaves; but if my arm
Be crown'd with conqueſt, you ſhall then live
ours.
Give me a man, if your effeminate bands
A man can boaſt. Your armies I defy."

DAVID.

What ſhall be done to him, who ſhall ſubdue
This vile idolater?

ABNER.

He ſhall receive
Such ample bounties, ſuch profuſe rewards,
As might inflame chill age, or cowardice,
Were not the odds ſo deſperate.

DAVID.

Say, what are they?

ABNER.

The royal Saul has promis'd that bold hero,
Who ſhall encounter and ſubdue Goliath,
All dignity and favour; that his houſe

Shall

Shall be ſet free from tribute, and ennobled
With the firſt honours Iſrael has to give.
And for the gallant conqueror himſelf,
No leſs a recompence than the fair princeſs,
Our monarch's peerleſs daughter.

DAVID.

Beauteous Michal!
It is indeed a boon which kings might ſtrive for.
And has none anſwer'd yet this bold defiance?
What, all this goodly hoſt of Iſraelites,
GOD's own peculiar people! all afraid
T' aſſert GOD's injur'd honour, and their own?
The king himſelf, who in his early youth
Wrought deeds of fame! the princely Jonathan!
Not ſo the gallant youth Philiſtia fear'd
At Bozez and at Seneh *; when the earth
Shook from her deep foundations, to behold
The wond'rous carnage of his ſingle hand

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

On

On the uncircumcis'd. When he exclaim'd,
With glorious confidence—"Shall numbers awe
me?
"God will protect his own: with him to ſave,
"It boots not, friends, by many or by few."
This was an hero! Why does he delay
To meet this boaſter? For thy courteſy,
Thrice noble Abner, I am bound to thank thee!
Wou'd'ſt thou complete thy gen'rous offices?
I dare not aſk it.

ABNER.

Speak thy wiſhes freely:
My ſoul inclines to ſerve thee.

DAVID.

Then, O Abner,
Conduct me to the king! There is a cauſe
Will juſtify this boldneſs.

ELIAB.

Braggard, hold!

ABNER.

ABNER.

I take thee at thy word; and will, with ſpeed,
Conduct thee to my royal maſter's preſence.
In yonder tent, the anxious monarch waits
Th' event of this day's challenge.

DAVID.

Noble Abner!
Accept my thanks. Now to thy private ear,
If ſo thy grace permit, I will unfold
My ſecret ſoul; and eaſe my lab'ring breaſt,
Which pants with high deſigns, and beats for glory.

DAVID

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART III.

SCENE, Saul's Tent.

SAUL.

WHY was I made a king? what I have gain'd
In envy'd greatneſs and uneaſy pow'r,
I've loſt in peace of mind, in virtue loſt!
Why did deceitful tranſports fire my ſoul,
When Samuel plac'd upon my youthful brow
The crown of Iſrael? I had known content,
Nay happineſs, if happineſs unmix'd

To

To mortal man were known ; had I ſtill liv'd
Among the humble tents of Benjamin.
A ſhepherd's occupation was my joy,
And every guiltleſs day was crown'd with peace.
But now, a ſullen cloud for ever hangs
O'er the faint ſunſhine of my brighteſt hours,
Dark'ning the golden promiſe of the morn.
I ne'er ſhall taſte the dear domeſtic joys
My meaneſt ſubjects know. True, I have ſons,
Whoſe virtues wou'd have charm'd a private man,
And drawn down bleſſings on their humble ſire.
I love their virtues too ; but 'tis a love,
Which jealouſy has poiſon'd. Jonathan
Is all a father's fondneſs cou'd conceive
Of amiable and good—Of that no more!
He is too popular ; the people doat
Upon th' ingenuous graces of his youth.
Curs'd popularity ! which makes a father
Deteſt the merit of a ſon he loves.
How did their fond idolatry perforce,
Reſcue his ſentenc'd life, when doom'd by lot

To periſh at Beth-aven*, for the breach
Of ſtrict injunction, that of all my bands,
Not one that day ſhou'd taſte of food, and live.
My ſubjects clamour at this tedious war,
Yet of my num'rous armed chiefs, not one
Has courage to engage this man of Gath.
O for a champion bold enough to face
This giant-boaſter, whoſe repeated threats
Strike thro' my inmoſt ſoul! There was a time—
Of that no more!——I am not what I was.
Shou'd valiant Jonathan accept the challenge,
'Twould but increaſe his favour with the people,
And make the crown ſit looſely on my brow.
Ill cou'd my wounded ſpirit brook the voice
Of harſh compariſon 'twixt ſire and ſon.

SAUL, ABNER.

ABNER.

What meditation holds thee thus engag'd,
O king! and keeps thine active ſpirit bound;

* 1 Samuel, xiv.

When

When buſy war far other cares demands
Than ruminating thought, and pale deſpair?

SAUL.

Abner, draw near. My weary ſoul ſinks down
Beneath the heavy preſſure of misfortune.
O for that ſpirit, which inflam'd my breaſt
With ſudden fervor; when, among the ſeers,
And holy ſages, my prophetic voice
Was heard attentive, and th' aſtoniſh'd throng,
Wond'ring, exclaim'd, 'Is Saul among the prophets?'
Where's that bold arm which quell'd th' Amalekite,
And nobly ſpar'd fierce Agag and his flocks?
'Tis paſt; the light of Iſrael now is quench'd:
Shorn of his beams, my ſun of glory ſets!
Riſe Moab, Edom, angry Ammon, riſe!
Come Gaza, Aſhdod come! let Ekron boaſt,
And Aſkelon rejoice, for Saul——is nothing.

ABNER.

I bring thee news, O king!

SAUL.

My valiant uncle!
What can avail thy news? A ſoul oppreſs'd,
Refuſes ſtill to hear the charmer's voice,
Howe'er enticingly he charm. What news
Can ſooth my ſickly ſoul, while Gath's fell giant
Repeats each morning to my frighten'd hoſts
His daring challenge—none accepting it?

ABNER.

It is accepted.

SAUL.

Ha! by whom? how? when?
What prince, what gen'ral, what illuſtrious hero,
What vet'ran chief, what warrior of renown,
Will dare to meet the haughty foe's defiance?
Speak, my brave gen'ral! noble Abner, ſpeak!

ABNER.

ABNER.

No prince, no warrior, no illuſtrious chief,
No vet'ran hero dares accept the challenge;
But what will move thy wonder, mighty king!
One train'd to peaceful deeds, and new to arms,
A ſimple ſhepherd ſwain.

SAUL.

O mockery!
No more of this light tale, it ſuits but ill
Thy bearded gravity: or rather tell it
To credulous age, or weak believing women;
They love whate'er is marvellous, and doat
On deeds prodigious and incredible,
Which ſober ſenſe rejects. I laugh to think
Of thy extravagance. A ſhepherd's boy
Encounter him, whom nations dread to meet!

ABNER.

Is valour, then, peculiar to high birth?
If Heav'n had ſo decreed, know, ſcornful king,

That Saul the Benjamite had never reign'd,
No:—Glory darts her ſoul-pervading ray,
On thrones and cottages, regardleſs ſtill
Of all the falſe, chimerical diſtinctions
Vain human cuſtoms make.

SAUL.

Where is this youth?

ABNER.

Without thy tent he waits. Such humble ſweetneſs,
Fir'd with the ſecret conſcience of deſert;
Such manly bearing, tempered with ſuch ſoftneſs,
And ſo adorn'd with every outward charm
Of graceful form and feature, ſaw I never.

SAUL.

Bring me the youth.

ABNER.

He waits thy royal pleaſure.

[*Exit* ABNER.

SAUL.

SAUL.

What muſt I think? Abner himſelf is brave,
And ſkill'd in human kind: nor does he judge
So lightly, to be caught by ſpecious words,
And fraud's ſmooth artifice, without the marks
Of worth intrinſic. But behold he comes!
The youth too with him! Juſtly did he praiſe
The candor, which adorns his open brow.

Re-enter ABNER *and* DAVID.

DAVID.

Hail, mighty king!

ABNER.

Behold thy proffer'd champion.

SAUL.

Art thou the youth, whoſe high heroic zeal
Aſpires to meet the giant ſon of Anak?

DAVID.

If ſo the king permit.

SAUL.

Impoſſible!
Why, what experience has thy youth of arms?
Where didſt thou learn the dreadful trade of war?
Beneath what hoary vet'ran haſt thou ſerv'd?
What feats atchiev'd, what deeds of bold emprize?
What well-rang'd phalanx, and what charging hoſts,
What hard campaigns, what ſieges haſt thou ſeen?
Haſt thou e'er ſcal'd the city's rampir'd wall,
Or hurl'd the miſſile dart, or learn'd to poiſe
The warriors deathful ſpear? The uſe of targe,
Of helm, and buckler, is to thee unknown.

DAVID.

Arms I have ſeldom ſeen. I little know
Of war's proud diſcipline. The trumpet's clang,
The ſhock of charging hoſts, the rampir'd wall,
Th' embattled phalanx, and the warrior ſpear,
The uſe of targe and helm to me is new.
My zeal for GOD, my patriot love of Iſrael,
And reverence for my king, theſe are my claims.

SAUL.

SAUL.

But, gentle youth, thou haſt no fame in arms.
Renown, with her ſhrill clarion, never bore
Thy honour'd name to many a land remote;
From the fair regions, where Euphrates laves
Aſſyria's borders, to the diſtant Nile.

DAVID.

True, mighty king! I am indeed alike
Unbleſs'd by Fortune, and to Fame unknown;
A lowly ſhepherd-ſwain of Judah's tribe.
But greatneſs ever ſprings from low beginnings.
That very Nile thou mention'ſt, whoſe broad ſtream
Bears fruitfulneſs and health thro' many a clime,
From an unknown, penurious, ſcanty ſource,
Took its firſt riſe. The foreſt oak, which ſhades
Thy ſultry troops in many a toilſome march,
Once an unheeded acorn lay. O king!
Who ne'er begins, can never ought atchieve
Of glorious. Thou thyſelf waſt once unknown,

'Till

'Till fair occaſion brought thy worth to light.
Sublimer views inſpire my youthful heart,
Than human praiſe; I ſeek to vindicate
Th' inſulted honour of the God thou ſerv'ſt.

ABNER.

'Tis nobly ſaid.

SAUL.

I love thy ſpirit, youth!
But dare not truſt thy inexperienc'd arm
Againſt a giant's might. The ſight of blood,
Tho' brave thou feel'ſt when peril is not nigh,
Will pale thy ardent cheek.

DAVID.

Not ſo, O king!
This youthful arm has been imbru'd in blood,
Tho' yet no blood of man has ever ſtain'd it.
Thy ſervant's occupation is a ſhepherd.
With jealous care I watch'd my father's flock:
A brindled lion, and a furious bear,

Forth

Forth from the thicket ruſh'd upon the fold,
Seiz'd a young lamb, and tore their bleating ſpoil.
Urg'd by compaſſion for my helpleſs charge,
I felt a new-born vigour nerve my arm,
And, eager, on the foaming monſters ruſh'd,
The famiſh'd lion by his griſly beard,
Enrag'd, I caught, and ſmote him to the ground.
The panting monſter ſtruggling in my gripe,
Shook terribly his briſtling mane, and laſh'd
His own gaunt, goary ſides; fiercely he ground
His gnaſhing teeth, and roll'd his ſtarting eyes,
Bloodſhot with agony; then with a groan,
That wak'd the echoes of the mountain, dy'd.
Nor did his grim aſſociate 'ſcape my arm;
Thy ſervant ſlew the lion and the bear;
I kill'd them both, and bore their ſhaggy ſpoils
In triumph home: and ſhall I fear to meet
Th' uncircumcis'd Philiſtine! No: that GOD,
Who ſav'd me from the bear's deſtructive fang,
And hungry lion's jaw, will not he ſave me
From this Idolater?

SAUL.

SAUL.

He will, he will!
Go, noble youth! be valiant, and be bleſs'd!
The God thou ſerv'ſt will ſhield thee in the fight,
And nerve thy arm with more than mortal ſtrength.

ABNER.

So the bold Nazarite* a lion ſlew,
And earneſt of his victories o'er Philiſtia.

SAUL.

Go, Abner; ſee the youth be well equipp'd
With ſhield and ſpear. Be it thy care to grace him
With all the fit accoutrements of war.
The choiceſt mail from my rich armory take,
And gird upon his thigh my own try'd ſword,
Of nobleſt temper'd ſteel.

ABNER.

I ſhall obey.

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* Sampſon. See Judges, chap. xiv.

DAVID.

Pardon, O king! the coat of plaited mail,
Theſe limbs have never known; it wou'd not ſhield,
'Twou'd but encumber one, who never felt
The weight of armour.

SAUL.

Take thy wiſh, my ſon.
Thy ſword then, and the GOD of Jacob guard thee!

DAVID.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

PART IV.

SCENE, another Part of the Camp.

DAVID.

ETERNAL Juſtice, in whoſe awful ſcale
Th' event of battle hangs! Eternal Mercy,
Whoſe univerſal beam illumines all!
If, by thy attributes I may, unblam'd,
Addreſs thee; Lord of Glory, hear me now!
O teach theſe hands to war, theſe arms to fight!
Thou ever preſent help in time of need!

Let

Let thy broad mercy, as a ſhield, defend;
And let thine everlaſting arms ſupport me!
Then, tho' the heathen rage, I ſhall not fear.
JEHOVAH! be my buckler. Mighty LORD!
Thou, who haſt deign'd by humble inſtruments,
To manifeſt the marvels of thy might,
Be preſent with me now! 'tis thy own cauſe!
Thy wiſdom will foreſee, thy goodneſs chuſe,
And thy omnipotence will execute
Thy high deſigns, tho' by a feeble arm!
I feel a ſecret impulſe drive me on,
And my ſoul ſprings impatient for the fight.
'Tis not the heated ſpirits, or warm blood
Of ſanguine youth; and yet I pant, I burn
To meet th' inſulting foe. I thirſt for glory;
Yet not the fading glory of renown,
The periſhable praiſe of mortal man.

DAVID.

DAVID, ELIAB, ISRAELITES.

ELIAB.

What do I hear, thou truant? thou haſt dar'd,
Ev'n to the awful preſence of the king,
Bear thy preſumption!

DAVID.

He, who fears the LORD,
Shall boldly ſtand before the face of kings,
And ſhall not be aſham'd.

ELIAB.

But what wild dream
Has urg'd thee to this deed of deſp'rate raſhneſs?
Thou mean'ſt, ſo have I learn'd, to meet Goliath,
His ſingle arm to thine.

DAVID.

DAVID.

'Tis what I mean,
Ev'n on this ſpot; each moment I expect
His wiſh'd approach.

ELIAB.

Go home; return, for ſhame!
Nor madly pull deſtruction on thy head.
Thy doating father, when thy ſhepherd's coat,
Drench'd in thy blood is brought him, will lament,
And rend his furrow'd cheek, and ſilver hair,
As if ſome mighty loſs had touch'd his age;
And mourn, even as the partial patriarch mourn'd,
When Joſeph's bloody garment he receiv'd,
From his leſs dear, not leſs deſerving, ſons.
But whence that glitt'ring ornament, which hangs
Uſeleſs upon thy thigh?

DAVID.

'Tis the king's gift.
But thou art right; it ſuits not me, my brother.

Nor ſword I mean to wear, nor ſpear to poize;
Leſt men ſhou'd ſay I put my truſt in ought,
Save an eternal ſhield.

ELIAB.

Then thou indeed
Art bent to ſeek thy death.

DAVID.

And what is death?
Is it ſo terrible to die, my brother?
Or grant it terrible, ſay is it not
Inevitable too? If, by eluding death,
When ſome high duty calls us forth to die,
We cou'd for ever ſhun it, and eſcape
The univerſal lot; then fond ſelf-love,
Then human prudence, boldly might produce
Their fine-ſpun arguments, their learn'd harangues,
Their cobweb arts, their phraſe ſophiſtical,
Their ſubtile doubts, and all the ſpecious trick,
Of eloquent cunning lab'ring for its end.

But

But ſince, howe'er protracted, death will come,
Why fondly ſtudy, with ingenious pains,
To put it off?——To breathe a little longer,
Is to defer our fate, but not to ſhun it:
Small gain! which Wiſdom with indiff'rent eye
Beholds. Why wiſh to drink the bitter dregs
Of life's exhauſted chalice, whoſe laſt runnings,
Ev'n at the beſt, are vapid? Why not die,
(If heav'n ſo well) in manhood's op'ning bloom,
When all the fluſh of life is gay about us,
When ſprightly youth, with many a new-born joy,
Solicits every ſenſe? So may we then
Preſent a ſacrifice, unmeet, indeed,
(Ah, how unmeet!) but more acceptable
Than the world's leavings; than a worn-out heart,
By vice enfeebled, and by vain deſires
Sunk and exhauſted!

ELIAB.

Hark! I hear a ſound
Of multitudes approaching!

DAVID.

'Tis the giant!
I ſee him not, but hear his meaſur'd pace.

ELIAB.

Look, where his pond'rous ſhield is borne before him!

DAVID.

Like a broad moon its ample diſk protends.
But ſoft, what unknown prodigy appears?
A moving mountain cas'd in poliſh'd braſs!

ELIAB. [*Getting behind* DAVID.

How's this? thou doſt not tremble. Thy firm joints
Betray no fear: Thy accents are not broken:
Thy cheek retains its red, thine eye its luſtre.
He comes more near. Doſt thou not fear him now?

DAVID.

DAVID.

No.

The vaſt coloſſal ſtatue nor inſpires
Reſpect nor fear. Mere magnitude of form,
Without proportion'd intellect and valour,
Strikes not my ſoul with rev'rence nor with awe.

ELIAB.

Near, and more near, he comes. I hold it raſh
To ſtay ſo near him, and expoſe a life,
Which may hereafter ſerve the ſtate. Farewell.
[*Exit.*

[GOLIATH *advances, clad in complete armour. One bearing his ſhield precedes him. The oppoſing armies are ſeen at a diſtance, drawn up on each ſide of the valley.* GOLIATH *begins to ſpeak, before he comes on.* DAVID *ſtands in the ſame place, with an air of indifference.*]

GOLIATH.

Where is the mighty man of war, who dares
Accept the challenge of Philiſtia's chief?
What victor king, what gen'ral drench'd in blood,
Claims this high privilege? What are his rights?
What proud credentials does the boaſter bring,
To prove his claim! What cities laid in aſhes?
What ruin'd provinces? What ſlaughter'd realms?
What heads of heroes, and what hearts of kings,
In battle kill'd, or at his altars ſlain,
Has he to boaſt? Is his bright armoury
Thick ſet with ſpears, and ſwords and coats of mail,
Of vanquiſh'd nations, by his ſingle arm
Subdued? Where is the mortal man ſo bold,
So much a wretch, ſo out of love with life,
To dare the weight of this uplifted ſpear,
Which never fell innoxious? Yet I ſwear,
I grudge the glory to his parting ſoul
To fall by this right-hand. 'Twill ſweeten death,
To know he had the honour to contend

With

With the dread ſon of Anak. Lateſt time
From blank oblivion ſhall retrieve *his* name,
Who dar'd to periſh in unequal fight
With Gath's triumphant champion. Come, advance!
Philiſtia's gods to Iſrael's. Sound, my herald—
Sound for the battle ſtrait!

[*Herald ſounds the trumpet.*

DAVID.

Behold thy foe!

GOLIATH.

I ſee him not.

DAVID.

Behold him here!

GOLIATH.

Say, where?
Direct my ſight. I do not war with boys.

DAVID.

I ſtand prepar'd, thy ſingle arm to mine.

GOLIATH.

Why, this is mockery, Minion! it may chance
To coſt thee dear. Sport not with things above thee:
But tell me who, of all this num'rous hoſt,
Expects his death from me? Which is the man,
Whom Iſrael ſends to meet my bold defiance?

DAVID.

Th' election of my ſov'reign falls on me.

GOLIATH.

On thee? on thee? by Dagon 'tis too much!
Thou curled Minion! thou a nation's champion!
'Twou'd move my mirth at any other time;
But trifling's out of tune. Begone, light boy!
And tempt me not too far.

DAVID.

I do defy thee;
Thou foul idolater! haſt thou not ſcorn'd

The

The armies of the living God I ſerve?
By me he will avenge upon thy head
Thy nation's ſins and thine. Arm'd with his name,
Unſhrinking, I dare meet the ſtouteſt foe
That ever bath'd his hoſtile ſpear in blood.

GOLIATH, *ironically.*

Indeed! 'tis wond'rous well! Now, by my Gods
The ſtripling plays the orator! Vain boy!
Keep cloſe to that ſame bloodleſs war of words,
And thou ſhalt ſtill be ſafe. Tongue-valiantwarrior!
Where is thy ſylvan crook, with garlands hung,
Of idle field-flowers? Where thy wanton harp,
Thou dainty finger'd hero? better ſtrike
Its note laſcivious, or the lulling lute
Touch ſoftly, than provoke the trumpet's rage.
I will not ſtain the honour of my ſpear
With thy inglorious blood. Shall that fair cheek
Be ſcarr'd with wounds unſeemly? Rather go,
And hold fond dalliance with the Syrian maids;
To wanton meaſures dance, and let them braid

The

The bright luxuriance of thy golden hair;
They, for their loſt Adonis, may miſtake
Thy dainty form.

DAVID.

Peace, thou unhallow'd railer!
O tell it not in Gath, nor let the ſound
Reach Aſkelon, how once your ſlaughter'd Lords,
By mighty * Samſon found one common grave:
When his broad ſhoulder the firm pillars heav'd,
And to its baſe the tott'ring fabric ſhook.

GOLIATH.

Inſulting boy! perhaps thou haſt not heard
The infamy of that inglorious day,
When your weak hoſts at † Eben-ezer pitch'd
Their quick-abandon'd tents? Then, when your ark,
Your taliſman, your charm, your boaſted pledge

* Judges, chap. xvi.
† 1 Samuel, chap. v.

Of

Of ſafety and ſucceſs, was tamely loſt!
And yet not tamely, ſince by me 'twas won.
When with this good right-arm I thinn'd your ranks,
And bravely cruſh'd, beneath a ſingle blow,
The choſen guardians of this vaunted ſhrine,
Hophni * and Phineas. The fam'd ark itſelf,
I bore to Aſhdod.

DAVID.

I remember too,
Since thou provok'ſt th' unwelcome truth, how all
Your bluſhing prieſts beheld their idol's ſhame;
When proſtrate Dagon fell before the ark,
And your frail God was ſhiver'd. Then Philiſtia,
Idolatrous Philiſtia flew for ſuccour
To Iſrael's help, and all her ſmitten nobles
Confeſs'd the LORD was GOD, and the bleſs'd ark,
Gladly, with reverential awe reſtor'd!

* Commentators ſay, that the Chaldee Paraphraſe makes Goliath boaſt, that he had killed Hophni and Phineas, and taken the ark priſoner.

GOLIATH.

By Aſhdod's fane thou ly'ſt. Now will I meet thee,
Thou inſect warrior! ſince thou dar'ſt me thus!
Already I behold thy mangled limbs,
Diſſever'd each from each, ere long to feed
The fierce, blood-ſnuffing vulture. Mark me well!
Around my ſpear I'll twiſt thy ſhining locks,
And toſs in air thy head all gaſh'd with wounds;
Thy lips, yet quiv'ring with the dire convulſion
Of recent death! Art thou not terrified?

DAVID.

No.
True courage is not mov'd by breath of words.
But the raſh bravery of boiling blood,
Impetuous, knows no ſettled principle.
A fev'riſh tide, it has its ebbs and flows,
As ſpirits riſe or fall, as wine inflames,
Or circumſtances change: But inborn Courage,
The gen'rous child of Fortitude and Faith,
Holds

Holds its firm empire in the conſtant ſoul;
And, like the ſtedfaſt pole-ſtar, never once
From the ſame fix'd and faithful point declines.

GOLIATH.

The curſes of Philiſtia's gods be on thee!
This fine-drawn ſpeech is meant to lengthen out
That little life thy words pretend to ſcorn.

DAVID.

Ha! ſay'ſt thou ſo? come on then! Mark us well.
Thou com'ſt to me with ſword, and ſpear, and
ſhield!
In the dread name of Iſrael's GOD, I come;
The living LORD of HOSTS, whom thou defy'ſt!
Yet tho' no ſhield I bring, no arms, except
Theſe five ſmooth ſtones I gather'd from the brook,
With ſuch a ſimple ſling as ſhepherds uſe;
Yet all expos'd, defenceleſs as I am,
The GOD I ſerve ſhall give thee up a prey
To my victorious arm. This day, I mean
To make th' uncircumciſed tribes confeſs

There

There is a God in Iſrael. I will give thee,
Spite of thy vaunted ſtrength, and giant bulk,
To glut the carrion kites. Nor thee alone;
The mangled carcaſſes of your thick hoſts,
Shall ſpread the plains of Elah: till Philiſtia,
Thro' all her trembling tents and flying bands,
Shall own that Judah's God is God indeed!
I dare thee to the trial!

GOLIATH.

Follow me.
In this good ſpear I truſt.

DAVID.

I truſt in Heav'n!
The God of battles ſtimulates my arm,
And fires my ſoul with ardor not its own.

DAVID.

DAVID AND GOLIATH:

PART V.

SCENE, The Tent of SAUL.

SAUL, *riſing from his couch.*

OH! that I knew the black and midnight arts
Of wizard ſorcery! that I could call
The ſlumb'ring ſpirit from the ſhades of hell!
Or, like Chaldean ſages, cou'd foreknow
Th' event of things unacted! I might then
Anticipate my fortune. How I'm fall'n!
The ſport of vain chimeras, the weak ſlave

Of

Of Fear and ſickly Fancy; coveting
To know the arts, which foul diviners uſe.
Thick blood, and moping melancholy, lead
To baleful Superſtition; that fell fiend,
Whoſe with'ring charms blaſt the fair bloom of virtue.
Why did my wounded pride with ſcorn reject
The wholeſome truths, which holy Samuel told me?
Why drive him from my preſence? he might now
Raiſe my ſunk ſoul, and my benighted mind
Enlighten with religion's cheering ray.
He dar'd to menace me with loſs of empire;
And I, for that bold honeſty, diſmiſs'd him.
" Another ſhall poſſeſs thy throne, he cry'd
" A ſtranger!" This unwelcome prophecy
Has lin'd my crown, and ſtrew'd my couch, with thorns.
Each ray of op'ning merit I diſcern
In friend or foe, diſtracts my troubled ſoul,
Leſt he ſhou'd prove my rival. But this morn,
Ev'n my young champion, lovely as he look'd

In

In blooming valour, ſtruck me to the ſoul
With jealouſy's barb'd dart. O Jealouſy!
Thou uglieſt fiend of hell! thy deadly venom
Preys on my vitals, turns the healthful hue
Of my freſh cheek to haggard fallowneſs,
And drinks my ſpirit up!

[*A flouriſh of trumpets, ſhouting*, &c. &c.

What ſounds are thoſe?
The combat is decided. Hark! again,
Thoſe ſhouts proclaim it! Now, O God of Jacob,
If yet thou haſt not quite withdrawn from Saul
Thy light and favour, proſper me this once!
But Abner comes! I dread to hear his tale.
Fair Hope, with ſmiling face, but ling'ring foot,
Has long deceiv'd me.

ABNER.

King of Iſrael, hail!
Now thou art king indeed. The youth has conquer'd,
Goliath's dead.

SAUL.

Oh, ſpeak thy tale again,
Leſt my fond ears deceive me!

ABNER.

Thy young champion
Has ſlain the Giant.

SAUL.

Then GOD is gracious ſtill,
In ſpite of my offences! But, good Abner,
How was it? tell me all! Where is my champion?
Quick let me preſs him to my grateful heart,
And pay him a king's thanks. And yet, who knows?
This forward friend may prove an active foe.
No more of that.--Tell me the whole, brave Abner!
And paint the glorious acts of my young hero!

ABNER.

Full in the center of the camp they ſtood;
Th' oppoſing armies rang'd on either ſide,

In

In proud array. The haughty Giant ſtalk'd,
Stately, acroſs the valley. Next the youth
With modeſt confidence advanc'd. Nor pomp,
Nor gay parade, nor martial ornament,
His graceful form adorn'd. Goliath ſtrait,
With ſolemn ſtate, began the buſy work
Of dreadful preparation. In one place,
His cloſely jointed mail an op'ning left,
For air, and only one: the watchful youth
Mark'd that the beaver of his helm was up.
Meanwhile the Giant ſuch a blow devis'd,
As wou'd have cruſh'd him; this the youth perceiv'd,
And from his well-directed ſling, he hurl'd,
With dextrous aim, a ſtone, which ſunk, deep lodg'd,
In the capacious forehead of the foe.
Then with a cry, as loud and terrible,
As Lybian lions roaring for their young,
Quite ſtunn'd, the furious Giant ſtagger'd, reel'd,
And fell: the mighty maſs of man fell prone.
With its own weight his ſhatter'd bulk was bruis'd.
His clattering arms rung dreadful thro' the field,

And the firm baſis of the ſolid earth
Shook. Chok'd with blood and duſt, he curs'd
his gods,
And dy'd blaſpheming! Strait the victor youth
Drew from its ſheath the Giant's pond'rous ſword,
And from the enormous trunk, the goary head,
Furious in death, he ſever'd. The grim viſage
Look'd threat'ning ſtill, and ſtill frown'd horribly.

SAUL.

O glorious deed! O valiant conqueror!

ABNER.

The youth ſo calm appear'd, ſo nobly firm;
So cool, yet ſo intrepid; that theſe eyes
Ne'er ſaw ſuch temperate valour, ſo chaſtis'd
By modeſty.

SAUL.

Thou dwell'ſt upon his praiſe
With needleſs circumſtance. 'Twas nobly done;
But others too have fought!

ABNER,

ABNER.

None, none ſo bravely,

SAUL.

What follow'd next?

ABNER.

The ſhouting Iſraelites
On the Philiſtines ruſh'd, and ſtill purſue
Their routed remnants. In diſmay, their bands
Diſorder'd fly. While ſhouts of loud acclaim
Purſue their brave deliverer. Lo, he comes!
Bearing the Giant's head, and ſhining ſword,
His well-earn'd trophies.

SAUL, ABNER, DAVID.

[DAVID, *bearing* GOLIATH's *head and ſword. He kneels, and lays both at* SAUL's *feet.*]

SAUL.

Welcome to my heart,
My glorious champion! my deliverer, welcome!

How ſhall I ſpeak the ſwelling gratitude
Of my full heart? or give thee the high praiſe
Thy gallant deeds deſerve?

DAVID.

O mighty king!
Sweet is the breath of praiſe, when giv'n by thoſe
Whoſe own high merit claims the praiſe they give.
But let not this one fortunate event,
By Heav'n directed, be aſcrib'd to me.
I might have fought with equal ſkill and courage,
And not have gain'd this conqueſt; then had ſhame,
Harſh obloquy, and foul diſgrace, befal'n me.
But proſp'rous fortune gains the praiſe of valour.

SAUL.

I like not this. In every thing ſuperior!
He ſoars above me. (*Aſide.*) Modeſt youth, thou'rt right.

And

And fortune, as thou ſay'ſt, deſerves the praiſe
We give to human valour.

DAVID.

Rather ſay
The GOD OF HOSTS deſerves it.

SAUL.

Tell me, youth!
What is thy name, and what thy father's houſe?

DAVID.

My name is David, Jeſſe is my ſire,
An humble Bethle'mite of Judah's tribe.

SAUL.

David, the ſon of Jeſſe! Sure that name
Has been familiar to me! Nay, thy voice,
Thy form and features, I remember too,
Tho' faint, and indiſtinctly.

ABNER.

In this Hero
Behold thy ſweet muſician; he, whoſe harp
Expell'd the melancholy fiend, whoſe pow'r
Enſlav'd thy ſpirit.

SAUL.

This the modeſt youth,
Whom, for his ſkill and virtues, I preferr'd
To bear my armour?

DAVID.

I am he, O king!

SAUL.

Why this concealment? tell me, valiant David!
Why didſt thou hide thy birth and name till now?

DAVID.

O king! I wou'd not ought from favour claim,
Or on remember'd ſervices preſume;

But

But on the ſtrength of my own actions ſtand,
Ungrac'd and unſupported.

ABNER.

Well he merits
The honours, which await him. Why, O king!
Doſt thou delay to bleſs his doubting heart
With his well-earn'd rewards? Thy lovely daughter,
By right of conqueſt his!

SAUL, *to* DAVID.

True—thou haſt won her.
She ſhall be thine—Yes, a king's word is paſt.

DAVID.

O boundleſs bleſſing! What, ſhall ſhe be mine,
For whom contending monarchs might renounce
Their ſlighted crowns?

[*Sounds of muſical inſtruments heard at a diſtance. Shouting and ſinging. A grand proceſſion.* CHORUS *of* HEBREW WOMEN.]

SAUL.

SAUL.

How's this? what ſounds of joy
Salute my ears? what means this pageantry?
This merry ſound of tabret and of harp?
What mean theſe idle inſtruments of triumph?
Theſe women, who in fair proceſſion move,
Making ſweet melody?

ABNER.

To pay due honour
To David, are they come.

SAUL. [*Aſide.*

A rival's praiſe
Is diſcord to the ear of jealouſy!

[*Marſhal ſymphony. After which* CHORUS *of* WOMEN *ſing.*]

I.

PREPARE! your feſtal rites prepare!
Let your triumphs rend the air!

Idol

Idol gods ſhall reign no more,
We the living LORD adore!
Let heathen hoſts on human helps repoſe,
Since Iſrael's GOD has routed Iſrael's foes.

II.

Let remoteſt nations know,
Proud Goliath's overthrow:
Fall'n, Philiſtia! is thy truſt,
Dagon's honour laid in duſt!
Who fears the LORD of Glory, need not fear
The brazen armour, or the lifted ſpear.

III.

See, the routed ſquadrons fly!
Hark! their clamours rend the ſky!
Blood and carnage ſtain the field!
See, the vanquiſh'd nations yield!
Diſmay and terror fill the frighten'd land;
While conqu'ring David routs the trembling band.

IV.

IV.

Lo! upon the tented field,
Royal Saul has thouſands kill'd!
Lo! upon th' enſanguin'd plain,
David has ten thouſand ſlain!
Let mighty Saul his vanquiſh'd thouſands tell,
While tenfold triumphs David's victories ſwell.

THE END.

BELSHAZZAR:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, who didſt weaken the nations!

ISAIAH.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

BELSHAZZAR, King of Babylon.

NITOCRIS, the Queen-mother.

COURTIERS, ASTROLOGERS, PARASITES.

DANIEL, the JEWISH Prophet.

Captive JEWS, &c. &c.

SCENE, BABYLON. Time, Night

☞ The ſubject of this Drama is taken from the Fifth Chapter of the Prophet DANIEL.

BELSHAZZAR.

PART I.

SCENE, near the Palace of BABYLON.

DANIEL, *and captive* JEWS.

DANIEL.

PARENT of life and light! ſole ſource of good!
Whoſe tender mercies thro' the tide of time,
In long ſucceſſive order, have ſuſtain'd,
And ſav'd the ſons of Iſrael! Thou, whoſe pow'r
Deliver'd righteous Noah from the flood,
The whelming flood, the grave of human kind!

Oh

Oh Thou! whoſe guardian care, and out-ſtretch'd hand,
Reſcued young Iſaac from the lifted arm,
Rais'd, at thy bidding, to devote a ſon,
An only ſon; doom'd by his ſire to die.
(Oh, ſaving Faith, by ſuch obedience prov'd!
Oh bleſt Obedience, hallow'd thus by faith!)
Thou, who in mercy ſav'dſt the choſen race,
In the wild deſert; and did'ſt there ſuſtain them,
By wonder-working love, tho' they rebell'd,
And murmur'd at the miracles that ſav'd them!
Oh, hear thy ſervant Daniel! hear, and help!
Thou whoſe almighty pow'r did after raiſe
Succeſſive leaders to defend our race:
Who ſenteſt valiant Joſhua to the field,
Thy people's champion, to the conq'ring field;
Where the revolving planet of the night,
Suſpended in her radiant round, was ſtay'd;
And the bright ſun, arreſted in his courſe,
Stupendouſly ſtood ſtill!

CHORUS

CHORUS *of* JEWS.

I.

What ailed thee, that thou ſtood'ſt ſtill,
O ſun! nor did thy flaming orb decline?
And thou, O moon! in Ajalon's dark vale,
Why didſt thou long beyond thy period ſhine?

II.

Was it at Joſhua's dread command,
The leader of the Iſraelitiſh band?
Yes—at a mortal bidding both ſtood ſtill;
'Twas Joſhua's word, but 'twas JEHOVAH's will.

III.

What all-controuling hand had force
To ſtop eternal Nature's conſtant courſe?
The wand'ring moon to one fix'd ſpot confine,
But He, whoſe fiat bade the planets ſhine?

DANIEL.

O Thou! who, when thy diſcontented hoſt,
Tir'd of JEHOVAH's rule, deſir'd a king,
In anger gav'ſt them Saul; and then again
Didſt wreſt the regal ſceptre from his hand,
To give it David—David, beſt belov'd!
Illuſtrious David! Poet, prophet, king!
Thou, who didſt ſuffer Solomon his ſon,
To build a glorious temple to thy name!
Oh hear thy ſervants, and forgive them too,
If, by ſevere neceſſity compell'd,
We worſhip here—we have no temple now;
Altar or ſanctuary, none is left.

CHORUS *of* JEWS.

O Judah! let thy captive ſons deplore,
Thy far-fam'd temple's now no more!
Fall'n is thy ſacred fane, thy glory gone,
Fall'n is thy temple, Solomon.

Ne'er

Ne'er did Barbaric kings behold,
With all their ſhining gems, their burniſh'd gold,
A fane ſo perfect, bright and fair;
For GOD himſelf was wont t'inhabit there:
Between the Cherubim his glory ſtood,
While the high-prieſt alone the dazzling ſplendor view'd.

How fondly did the Tyrian artiſt ſtrive,
His name to lateſt time ſhou'd live!
Such wealth the ſtranger wonder'd to behold:
Gold were the tablets, and the vaſes gold.
Of cedar ſuch an ample ſtore,
Exhauſted Lebanon cou'd yield no more.
Bending before the Ruler of the ſky,
Well might the royal founder cry,
Fill'd with an holy dread, a rev'rend fear,
Will GOD in very deed inhabit here?
The heav'n of heav'ns beneath his feet,
Is for the bright inhabitant unmeet:

Archangels proſtrate wait his high commands,
And will he deign to dwell in temples made with hands?

DANIEL.

Yes, thou art ever preſent, Pow'r ſupreme!
Not circumbſcrib'd by time, nor fix'd to ſpace,
Confin'd to altars, nor to temples bound.
In wealth, in want, in freedom, or in chains,
In dungeons or on thrones, the faithful find thee!
Ev'n in the burning cauldron thou waſt near
To Shadrach and the holy brotherhood:
The unhurt martyrs bleſs'd thee in the flames;
They ſought, and found thee; call'd, and thou waſt there.

Firſt JEW.

How chang'd our ſtate! Judah! thy glory's fall'n:
Thy joys for hard captivity exchang'd;
And thy ſad ſons breathe the polluted air
Of Babylon, where deities obſcene

Inſult

Inſult the living God; and to his ſervants,
The prieſts of wretched idols, made with hands,
Shew contumelious ſcorn.

DANIEL.

'Tis Heav'n's high will.

Second JEW.

If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem!
If I not fondly cheriſh thy lov'd image,
Ev'n in the giddy hour of thoughtleſs mirth;
If I not rather view thy proſtrate walls
Than haughty Babylon's imperial tow'rs;
Then may my tongue refuſe to frame the ſtrains
Of ſweeteſt harmony; my rude right-hand
Forget, with ſounds ſymphonious, to accord
The harp of Jeſſe's ſon, to Sion's ſongs.

Firſt JEW.

Oft, on Euphrates' ever verdant banks,
Where drooping willows form a mournful ſhade;
With all the pride which proſp'rous fortunes give,

And all th' unfeeling mirth of happy men,
Th' inſulting Babylonians aſk a ſong;
Such ſongs as erſt, in better days, were ſung
By Korah's ſons, or heav'n-taught Aſaph ſet
To loftieſt meaſures; then our burſting hearts
Feel all their woes afreſh; the galling chain
Of bondage cruſhes then the free-born ſoul
With wringing anguiſh; from the trembling lip
Th' unfiniſh'd cadence falls, and the big tear,
While it relieves, betrays the woe-fraught ſoul.
For who can view Euphrates' pleaſant ſtream,
Its drooping willows, and its verdant banks,
And not to wounded memory recal
The piny groves of fertile Palæſtine,
The vales of Solyma, and Jordan's ſtream?

DANIEL.

Firm faith, and deep ſubmiſſion to high Heav'n,
Will teach us to endure, without a murmur,
What ſeems ſo hard. Think what the holy hoſt
Of patriarchs, ſaints and prophets, have ſuſtain'd

In

In the bleſt cauſe of Truth! And ſhall not we,
O men of Judah! dare what theſe have dar'd,
And boldly paſs thro' the refining fire
Of fierce affliction? Yes, be witneſs, Heav'n!
Old as I am, I will not ſhrink at death,
Come in what ſhape it may, if GOD ſo will,
By peril to confirm and prove my faith.
Oh! I wou'd dare yon' den of hungry lions,
Rather than pauſe to fill the taſk aſſign'd,
By wiſdom infinite. Nor think I boaſt,
Not in myſelf, but in thy ſtrength I truſt,
Spirit of GOD!

Firſt JEW.

Prophet! thy words ſupport,
And raiſe our ſinkings ſouls.

DANIEL.

Behold yon' palace,
Where proud Belſhazzar keeps his wanton court!
I knew it once beneath another lord,

His grandſire*, who ſubdued Jehoiachin,
And hither brought ſad Judah's captive tribes;
Together with the rich and precious relics
Of our fam'd temple; all the holy treaſure,
The golden vaſes, and the ſacred cups,
Which grac'd, in happier times, the ſanctuary.

Second JEW.

May HE, to whoſe bleſt uſe they were devoted,
Preſerve them from pollution; and once more,
In his own gracious time, reſtore the temple!

DANIEL.

I, with ſome favour'd youths of Jewiſh race,
Was lodg'd in his own palace, and inſtructed
In all the various learning of the eaſt:
But HE, on whoſe great name our fathers call'd,
Preſerv'd us from the perils of a court;
And warn'd us to avoid the tempting cates

* Nebuchadnezzar.

Pernicious

Pernicious lux'ry offer'd to our taſte.
Fell luxury! more perilous to virtue
Than ſtorms or quickſands, poverty or chains.

Second JEW.

He, who can guard 'gainſt the low baits of ſenſe,
Will find Temptation's arrows hurtleſs ſtrike
Againſt the brazen ſhield of Temperance.
For 'tis th' inferior appetites enthrall
The man, andquench th' immortal light within him;
The ſenſes take the ſoul an eaſy prey,
And ſink th' impriſon'd ſpirit into brute.

DANIEL.

Twice *, by the Spirit of GOD, did I expound
The viſions of the king; his ſoul was touch'd,
And twice did he repent, and proſtrate fall
Before the GOD of Daniel: yet again,
Pow'r, flatt'ry, and proſperity, undid him.
When from the lofty ramparts of his palace,
He view'd the ſplendors of the royal city,

* Daniel, chap. ii. and iv.

That

That magazine of wealth, which proud Euphrates
Wafts from each diſtant corner of the earth;
When he beheld the adamantine towers,
The brazen gates, the bulwarks of his ſtrength,
The pendent gardens, art's ſtupendous work,
The wonder of the world!—The proud Chaldean,
Mad with the inſolence of boundleſs wealth,
And pow'r ſupreme, conceiv'd himſelf a God,
"This mighty Babylon is mine," he cried,
"*My* wondrous pow'r, *my* godlike arm atchiev'd it.
"I ſcorn ſubmiſſion, own no deity
"Above my own."—While the blaſphemer ſpoke,
The wrath of Heav'n inflicted inſtant vengeance:
Stripp'd him of that bright reaſon he abus'd,
And drove him from the chearful haunts of men,
A naked, wretched, helpleſs, ſenſeleſs thing;
Companion of the brutes, his equals now.

Firſt JEW.

Nor does his impious grandſon, proud Belſhazzar,
Fall ſhort of his offences; nay, he wants

The

The valiant ſpirit, and the active ſoul,
Of his progenitor: for Pleaſure's ſlave,
Though bound in flow'ry fetters, ſilken chains,
Is more ſubdued, than is the caſual victim
Of furious rage, and violent ambition.
Ambition is a fierce, but ſhort liv'd fire;
But Pleaſure with a conſtant flame conſumes.
War ſlays her thouſands; but deſtructive pleaſure,
More fell, more fatal, her ten thouſands ſlays:
The young, luxurious king ſhe fondly wooes
In every ſhape of am'rous blandiſhment;
With adulation ſmooth enſnares his ſoul,
With love betrays him, and with wine inflames.
She ſtrews her magic poppies o'er his couch;
And with delicious opiates charms him down,
In fatal ſlumbers bound. Though Babylon
Is now inveſted by the warlike troops
Of the young Cyrus, Perſia's valiant prince;
Who, in conjunction with the Median king,
Darius, fam'd for conqueſt, now prepares

To

To ſtorm the city: not th' impending horrors
Which ever wait a ſiege, have power to wake
To thought, or ſenſe, th' intoxicated king.

DANIEL.

Ev'n in this night of univerſal dread,
A mighty army threat'ning at the gates;
This very night, as if in ſcorn of danger,
The diſſolute Belſhazzar holds a feaſt
Magnificently impious, meant to honour
Belus, the fav'rite Babyloniſh idol.
Lewd paraſites compoſe his wanton court,
Whoſe impious flatt'ries ſoothe his monſtrous crimes,
They juſtify his vices, and extol
His boaſtful phraſe, as if he were ſome god.
Whate'er he ſays, they ſay; what he commands,
Implicitly they do; they echo back
His blaſphemies, with ſhouts of loud acclaim;
And when he wounds the tortur'd ear of Virtue,
They cry, All hail! Belſhazzar live for ever!
To-night a thouſand nobles fill his hall,

Princes,

Princes, and all the dames who grace the court;
All but the virtuous queen, ſage Nìtocris;
Ah! how unlike the impious king her ſon!
She never mingles in the midnight fray,
Nor crowns the guilty banquet with her preſence.
The royal fair is rich in every virtue
Which can adorn the queen, or grace the woman.
But for the wiſdom of her prudent counſels
This wretched empire had been long undone.
Not fam'd Semiramis, Aſſyria's pride,
Cou'd boaſt a brighter mind, or firmer ſoul;
Beneath the gentle reign of * Merodach,
Her royal lord, our nation taſted peace.
Our captive monarch, ſad Jehoiachin,
Grown grey in a cloſe priſon's horrid gloom,
He freed from bondage; brought the hoary king
To taſte once more the long-forgotten ſweets
Of precious liberty, and chearful light;

---

* 2 Kings, chap. xxv.

Pour'd

Pour'd in his wounds the lenient balm of kindneſs,
And bleſs'd his ſetting hour of life with peace.

[*Sound of trumpets is heard at a diſtance.*

Firſt JEW.

That Sound proclaims the banquet is begun.

Second JEW.

Hark! the licentious uproar grows more loud.
The vaulted roof reſounds with ſhouts of mirth,
And the firm palace ſhakes! Retire, my friends;
This madneſs is not meet for ſober ears.
If any of our race were found ſo near,
'Twould but expoſe us to the rude attack
Of ribaldry obſcene, and impious jeſts,
From theſe mad ſons of Belial, now inflam'd
To deeds of riot from the wanton feaſt.

DANIEL.

Here part we then! but when again to meet,
Who knows ſave Heav'n? Yet, O, my friends! I feel

An

An impulſe more than human ſtir my breaſt.
Rapt in prophetic * viſion, I behold
Things hid as yet from mortal ſight. I ſee
The dart of vengeance tremble in the air,
Ere long to pierce the impious king. Ev'n now
The fierce, deſtroying angel ſtalks abroad,
And brandiſhes aloft the two-edg'd ſword
Of retribution keen; he ſoon will ſtrike,
And Babylon ſhall weep as Sion wept.
Paſs but a little while, and you ſhall ſee
This queen of cities proſtrate on the earth.
This haughty miſtreſs of the kneeling world,
How ſhall ſhe ſit diſhonour'd in the duſt,
In tarniſh'd pomp and ſolitary woe!
How ſhall ſhe ſhroud her glories in the dark,
And in opprobrious ſilence hide her head!
Lament, O virgin daughter of Chaldea!
For thou ſhall fall, imperial queen! ſhalt fall!

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* See the Prophecies of Iſaiah, chap. xlvii. and others.

No more Sidonian robes ſhall grace thy limbs.
To purple garments, ſackcloth ſhall ſucceed;
And ſordid duſt and aſhes ſhall ſupply
The od'rous nard and caſſia. Thou, who ſaid'ſt;
I am, and there is none beſide me: thou,
Ev'n thou, imperial Babylon! ſhalt fall:
Thy glory quite eclips'd! The pleaſant ſound
Of viol, and of harp, ſhall charm no more;
Nor ſong of Syrian damſels ſhall be heard,
Reſponſive to the lute's luxurious note.
But the loud bittern's cry, the raven's croak,
The bat's fell ſcream, the lonely owl's dull plaint,
And every hideous bird with ominous ſhriek,
Shall ſcare affrighted Silence from thy walls.
While DESOLATION, ſnatching from the hand
Of Time the ſcythe of ruin, ſits aloft,
In dreadful majeſty and horrid pomp;
Glancing with ſullen pride thy crumbling tow'rs,
Thy broken battlements, thy columns fall'n:
Then, pointing to the miſchiefs ſhe has made,
The fiend exclaims, This once was Babylon!

BELSHAZZAR.

PART II.

SCENE, *The Court of* BELSHAZZAR. *The King ſeated on a magnificent throne. Princes, Nobles and Attendants. Ladies of the Court. Muſic—A ſuperb Banquet.*

Firſt COURTIER. *Riſes and kneels.*

HAIL, mighty king!

Second COURTIER.

Belſhazzar, live for ever!

Third COURTIER.

Sun of the world, and light of kings, all hail!

Fourth COURTIER.

With loweſt reverence, ſuch as beſt becomes
The humbleſt creatures of imperial power,
Behold a thouſand nobles bend before thee!
Princes far fam'd, and dames of high deſcent:
Yet all this pride of wealth, this boaſt of beauty,
Shrinks into nought before thine awful eye!
And lives, or dies, as the king frowns, or ſmiles!

BELSHAZZAR.

This is ſuch homage, as becomes your love;
And ſuits the mighty monarch of mankind.

Fifth COURTIER.

The bending world ſhou'd proſtrate thus before thee;
And pay, not only praiſe, but adoration!

BELSHAZZAR. *Riſes, and comes forward.*

Let dull philoſophy preach ſelf-denial;
Let envious poverty, and ſnarling age,
Proudly declaim againſt the joys they know not.

Let

Let the deluded Jews, who fondly hope
Some fancied heav'n hereafter, mortify;
And loſe the actual bleſſings of this world,
To purchaſe others which may never come.
Our Gods may promiſe leſs, but give us more.
Ill cou'd my ardent ſpirit be content
With meagre abſtinence, and hungry hope.
Let thoſe misjudging Iſraelites, who want
The nimble ſpirits, and the active ſoul,
Call their blunt feelings virtue: let them drudge,
In regular progreſſion, thro' the round
Of formal duty, and of daily toil;
And, when they want the genius to be bleſt,
Believe their harſh auſterity is goodneſs.
If there be Gods, they meant we ſhou'd be happy,
Why give us elſe theſe appetites to be ſo?
And why, the means to crown them with indulgence?
To burſt the feeble bonds, which hold the vulgar,
Is noble daring.

Firſt COURTIER.

And is therefore worthy,
The high imperial ſpirit of Belſhazzar.

Second COURTIER.

Behold a banquet, which the gods might ſhare.

BELSHAZZAR.

To-night, my friends! your monarch ſhall be bleſt
With ev'ry various joy; to-night is ours;
Nor ſhall the envious gods, who view our bliſs,
And ſicken as they view, to-night diſturb us.
Bring all the richeſt ſpices of the Eaſt,
Th' od'rous caſſia, and the dropping myrrh;
The liquid amber, and the fragrant gums;
Rob Gilead of its balms, Belſhazzar bids,
And leave the Arabian groves without an odour.
Bring freſheſt flow'rs, exhauſt the blooming ſpring,
Twine the green myrtle with the ſhort-liv'd roſe;
And ever, as the bluſhing garland fades,
We'll learn to ſnatch the fugitive delight,

And

And graſp the flying joy ere it eſcape us.
Come—fill the ſmiling goblet for the king;
Belſhazzar will not let a moment paſs,
Unmark'd by ſome enjoyment! The full bowl
Let every gueſt partake!

[*Courtiers kneel, and drink.*

Firſt COURTIER.

Here's to the king!
Light of the world, and glory of the earth,
Whoſe word is fate!

BELSHAZZAR.

Yes, we are likeſt gods,
When we have pow'r, and uſe it. What is wealth,
But the bleſt means to gratify deſire?
I will not have a wiſh, a hope, a thought,
That ſhall not know fruition. What is empire?
The privilege to puniſh and enjoy;
To feel our pow'r in making others fear it;
To taſte of pleaſure's cup till we grow giddy,
And think ourſelves immortal. This is empire!

My anceſtors ſcarce taſted of its joys:
Shut from the ſprightly world, and all its charms,
In cumbrous majeſty, in ſullen ſtate,
And dull unſocial dignity they liv'd;
Far from the ſight of an admiring world,
That world, whoſe gaze makes half the charms of greatneſs;
They nothing knew of empire but the name,
Or ſaw it in the looks of trembling ſlaves;
And all they felt of royalty was care.
But I will ſee, and know it of myſelf;
Youth, wealth, and greatneſs court me to be bleſt,
And Pow'r and Pleaſure draw with equal force
And ſweet attraction: both I will embrace
With fond delight; but this is Pleaſure's day;
Ambition will have time to reign hereafter;
It is the proper appetite of age.
The luſt of pow'r ſhall lord it uncontroul'd,
When all the gen'rous feelings grow obtuſe,
And ſtern dominion holds, with rigid hand,
His iron rein, and ſits and ſways alone.
But youth is Pleaſure's hour!

Firſt COURTIER.

Periſh the ſlave
Who, with officious counſel, wou'd oppoſe
The king's deſire, whoſe ſlighteſt wiſh is law!

BELSHAZZAR.

Now ſtrike the loud-ton'd lyre, and ſofter lute;
Let me have muſic, with the nobler aid
Of poeſy! Where are thoſe cunning men,
Who boaſt, by choſen ſounds, and meaſur'd ſweetneſs,
To ſet the buſy ſpirits in a flame,
And cool them at their will? who know the art
To call the hidden pow'rs of numbers forth,
And make that pliant inſtrument, the mind,
Yield to the pow'rful ſympathy of ſound,
Obedient to the maſter's artful hand?
Such magic is in ſong! Then give me ſong;
Yet not at firſt ſuch ſoul-diſſolving ſtrains,

As melt the ſoften'd ſenſe; but ſuch bold meaſures,
As may inflame my ſpirit to deſpiſe
The ambitious Perſian, that preſumptuous boy,
Who raſhly dares ev'n now inveſt our city,
And menaces th' invincible Belſhazzar.

A grand CONCERT *of* MUSIC, *after which an* ODE.

In vain ſhall Perſian Cyrus dare
With great Belſhazzar wage unequal war:
In vain Darius ſhall combine,
Darius, leader of the Median line;
While fair Euphrates' ſtream our walls protects,
And great Belſhazzar's ſelf our fate directs.
War and famine threat in vain,
While this demi-god ſhall reign!
Let Perſia's proſtrate king confeſs his pow'r,
And Media's monarch dread his vengeful hour.

On

On Dura's * ample plain behold
Immortal Belus †, whom the nations own;
Sublime he ſtands in burniſh'd gold,
And richeſt offerings his bright altars crown.
To-night his deity we here adore,
And due libations ſpeak his mighty pow'r.
Yet Belus' ſelf not more we own,
Than great Belſhazzar on Chaldea's throne.
Great Belſhazzar, like a god,
Rules the nations with a nod!
To great Belſhazzar be the goblet crown'd!
Belſhazzar's name the echoing roofs rebound!

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* Daniel, chap. iii.

† See a very fine deſcription of the Temple of this Idol.

——— The tow'ring fane
Of Bel, Chaldean Jove, ſurpaſſing far
That Doric Temple, which the Elean chiefs
Rais'd to their thunderer from the ſpoils of war;
Or that Ionic, where th' Epheſian bow'd
To Dian, queen of heaven. Eight towers ariſe,
Each above each, immeaſurable height,
A monument at once of Eaſtern pride,
And ſlaviſh ſuperſtition, &c. &c.

JUDAH RESTORED, Book I.

BEL-

BELSHAZZAR.

Enough! the kindling rapture fires my brain,
And my heart dances to the flatt'ring ſounds.
I feel myſelf a god! Why not a god?
What were the deities our fathers worſhipp'd?
What was great Nimrod, our imperial founder?
What, greater Belus, to whoſe pow'r divine,
We raiſe to-night the banquet and the ſong;
But youthful heroes, mortal, like myſelf,
Who by their daring earn'd divinity?
They were but men: nay, ſome were leſs than men,
Tho' now rever'd as Gods. What was Anubis,
Whom Egypt's ſapient ſons adore? A dog!
And ſhall not I, young, valiant, and a king,
Dare more? do more? be greater than the reſt?
I will indulge the thought.—Fill me more wine,
To cheriſh and exalt the young idea! [*He drinks.*
Ne'er did Olympian Jupiter himſelf
Quaff ſuch immortal draughts.

Firſt

Firſt COURTIER.

What cou'd that Canaan,
That heaven in hope, that nothing in poſſeſſion,
That air-built bliſs of the deluded Jews,
That promis'd land of milk, and flowing honey;
What cou'd that fancied Paradiſe beſtow
To match theſe generous juices?

BELSHAZZAR.

Hold—enough!
Thou haſt rous'd a thought; by Heav'n I will enjoy it;
A glorious thought! which will exalt to rapture
The pleaſures of the banquet, and beſtow
A yet untaſted reliſh of delight.

Firſt COURTIER.

What means the king?

BELSHAZZAR.

The Jews! ſaidſt thou the Jews?

Firſt

Firſt COURTIER.

I ſpoke of that undone, that outcaſt people.
The tributary creatures of thy pow'r,
The captives of thy will, whoſe very breath
Hangs on the ſov'reign pleaſure of the king.

BELSHAZZAR.

When that abandon'd race was hither brought,
Were not the choiceſt treaſures of their temple,
(Devoted to their God, and held moſt precious)
Among the ſpoils which grac'd *Nebaſſar's triumph,
And lodg'd in Babylon?

Firſt COURTIER.

O king! they were.

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* The name of Nebuchadnezzar not being reducible to verſe, I have adopted that of Nebaſſar, on the authority of the ingenious and learned Author of *Judah Reſtored.*

Second

Second COURTIER.

The Jews, with ſuperſtitious awe, behold
Theſe ſacred ſymbols of their ancient faith:
Nor has captivity abated ought
The rev'rend love they bear theſe holy reliques.
Tho' we deride their law, and ſcorn their perſons,
Yet never have we yet to human uſe
Devoted theſe rich veſſels ſet apart
To ſacred purpoſes.

BELSHAZZAR.

I joy to hear it!
Go—fetch them hither. They ſhall grace our banquet.
Does no one ſtir? Belſhazzar diſobey'd?
And yet you live! Whence comes this ſtrange reluctance?
This new-born rev'rence for the helpleſs Jews?
This fear to injure thoſe, who can't revenge it?

Send

Send to the ſacred treaſury in haſte,
Let all be hither brought;—who anſwers, dies.

[*They go out.*

The mantling wine a higher joy will yield,
Pour'd from the precious flaggons which adorn'd
Their far-fam'd temple, now in aſhes laid.
Oh! 'twill exalt the pleaſure into tranſport,
To gall thoſe whining, praying Iſraelites!
I laugh to think what wild diſmay will ſeize them,
When they ſhall learn the uſe that has been made
Of all their holy trumpery!

[*The veſſels are brought in.*

Second COURTIER.

It comes!
A goodly ſhew! how bright with gold and gems!
Far fitter for a youthful monarch's board,
Than the cold ſhrine of an unheeding god.

BELSHAZZAR.

Fill me that maſſy goblet to the brim.
Now, Abraham! let thy wretched race expect
The fable of their faith to be fulfill'd;
Their ſecond temple, and their promis'd king!
Now will they ſee, he's impotent to ſave;
For had he pow'r to help, he wou'd have hinder'd
This profanation.

[*As the king is going to drink, thunder is heard; he ſtarts from the throne, ſpies a hand, which writes on the wall theſe words,* MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. *He lets fall the goblet, and ſtands in an attitude of ſpeechleſs horror. All ſtart and terrified.*]

Firſt COURTIER, *after a long pauſe.*

Oh, tranſcendent horror!

Second COURTIER.

What may this mean! The king is greatly mov'd!

Third

Third COURTIER.

Nor is it ſtrange—who unappall'd can view it?
Thoſe ſacred cups! I doubt we've gone too far.

Firſt COURTIER.

Obſerve the fear-ſtruck king! his ſtarting eyes
Roll horribly. Thrice he eſſay'd to ſpeak,
And thrice his tongue refus'd.

BELSHAZZAR, *in a low trembling voice.*

Ye myſtic words!
Thou ſemblance of an hand! illuſive forms!
Ye dire fantaſtic images, what are ye?
Dread ſhadows, ſpeak! Explain your horrible meaning!
Ye will not anſwer me—Yes, yes, I feel
I am a mortal now—My failing limbs
Refuſe to bear me up. I am no god!
Gods do not tremble thus—Support me, hold me;
Theſe looſen'd joints, theſe knees which ſmite each other,
Betray I'm but a man—a weak one too!

Firſt

First COURTIER.

In truth, 'tis paſſing ſtrange, and full of horror!

BELSHAZZAR.

Send for the learn'd magicians, every ſage
Who deals in wizard ſpells and magic charms.
[*Some go out.*

First COURTIER.

How fares my lord the king?

BELSHAZZAR.

Am I a king?
What pow'r have I? Ye lying ſlaves, I am not.
Oh, ſoul-diſtracting ſight! but is it real?
Perhaps 'tis fancy all, or the wild dream
Of mad diſtemperature, the fumes of wine!
I'll look upon't no more!—So—now I'm well!
I am a king again, and know not fear.
And yet my eyes will ſeek that fatal ſpot;
And fondly dwell upon the ſight, that blaſts them!

Again, 'tis there! it is not fancy's work.
I ſee it ſtill! 'tis written on the wall,
I ſee the writing, but the viewleſs writer,
Who, what is he? Oh, horror! horror! horror!
It cannot be the GOD of theſe poor Jews;
For what is He, that He can thus afflict?

Second COURTIER.

Let not my lord the king be thus diſmay'd.

Third COURTIER.

Let not a phantom, an illuſive ſhade,
Diſturb the peace of him who rules the world.

BELSHAZZAR.

No more, ye wretched ſycophants! no more!
The ſweeteſt note, which flatt'ry now can ſtrike,
Harſh and diſcordant grates upon my ſoul.
Talk not of pow'r to one ſo full of fear,
So weak, ſo impotent! Look on that wall;
If thou wou'dſt ſooth my ſoul, explain the writing,
And thou ſhalt be my oracle, my God!

Tell

Tell me from whence it came, and what it means,
And I'll believe I am again a king!
Friends! Princes! eaſe my troubled breaſt; and ſay,
What do the myſtic characters portend?

Firſt COURTIER.

'Tis not in us, O king! to eaſe thy ſpirit;
We are not ſkill'd in thoſe myſterious arts,
Which wait the midnight ſtudies of the ſage:
But of the deep diviners thou ſhalt learn,
The wiſe aſtrologers, the ſage magicians;
Who, of events unborn, take ſecret note,
And hold deep commerce with the unſeen world.

Enter ASTROLOGERS, MAGICIANS, *&c. &c.*

BELSHAZZAR.

Approach, ye ſages, 'tis the king commands!

[They kneel.

ASTROLOGERS.

Hail, mighty king of Babylon!

BELSHAZZAR.

Nay, riſe:
I do not need your homage, but your help;
The world may worſhip, you muſt counſel me.
He, who declares the ſecret of the king,
No common honours ſhall await his ſkill;
Our empire ſhall be tax'd for his reward,
And he himſelf ſhall name the gift he wiſhes.
A ſplendid ſcarlet robe ſhall grace his limbs,
His neck a princely chain of gold adorn,
Meet honours for ſuch wiſdom: He ſhall rule
The third in rank throughout our Babylon.

Second ASTROLOGER.

Such recompence becomes Belſhazzar's bounty.
Let the king ſpeak the ſecret of his ſoul;
Which heard, his humble creatures ſhall unfold.

BEL-

BELSHAZZAR, *points to the wall.*

Be't ſo—look there—behold thoſe characters!
Nay, do not ſtart, for I will know their meaning!
Ha! anſwer; ſpeak, or inſtant death awaits you!
What, dumb! all dumb! where is your boaſted ſkill?

[*They confer together.*

Keep them aſunder—no confed'racy——
No ſecret plots to make your tales agree.
Speak, ſlaves, and dare to let me know the worſt!

Firſt ASTROLOGER.

[*They kneel.*

O, Let the king forgive his faithful ſervants!

Second ASTROLOGER.

O mitigate our threaten'd doom of death;
If we declare, with mingled grief and ſhame,
We cannot tell the ſecret of the king,
Nor what theſe myſtic characters portend!

BELSHAZZAR.

Off with their heads! Ye ſhall not live an hour!
Curſe on your ſhallow arts, your lying ſcience!
'Tis thus you practiſe on the credulous world,
Who think you wiſe, becauſe themſelves are weak!
But, miſcreants, ye ſhall die! the pow'r to puniſh
Is all that I have left me of a king.

Firſt COURTIER.

Great Sir! ſuſpend their puniſhment awhile.
Behold ſage Nitocris, thy royal mother!

BELSHAZZAR.

Enter QUEEN.

QUEEN.

O my miſguided ſon!
Well may'ſt thou wonder to behold me here:
For I have ever ſhunn'd this ſcene of riot,
Where

Where wild intemperance and diſhonour'd Mirth
Hold feſtival impure. Yet, O Belſhazzar!
I could not hear the wonders which befel,
And leave thee to the workings of deſpair:
For, ſpite of all the anguiſh of my ſoul
At thy offences, I'm thy mother ſtill!
Againſt the ſolemn purpoſe I had form'd
Never to mix in this unhallow'd crowd,
The wond'rous ſtory of the myſtic writing,
Of ſtrange and awful import, brings me here;
If haply I may ſhew ſome likely means
To fathom this dark myſtery.

BELSHAZZAR.

Speak, O queen!
My liſt'ning ſoul ſhall hang upon thy words,
And prompt obedience follow them!

QUEEN.

Then hear me.
Among the captive tribes, which hither came

To grace Nebaſſar's triumph, there was brought
A youth nam'd Daniel, favour'd by high Heav'n
With pow'r to look into the ſecret page
Of dim futurity's myſterious volume.
The ſpirit of the holy Gods is in him;
No viſion ſo obſcure, no fate ſo dark,
No ſentence ſo perplex'd, but he can ſolve it:
Can trace each crooked labyrinth of thought,
Each winding maze of doubt, and make it clear,
And palpable to ſenſe. He twice explain'd
The monarch's myſtic dreams. The holy ſeer
Saw, with prophetic ſpirit, what befel
The king long after. For his wond'rous ſkill
He was rewarded, honour'd, and careſs'd,
And with the rulers of Chaldea rank'd;
Tho' now, alas! thrown by; his ſervices
Forgotten or neglected; ſuch the meed
Which virtue finds in courts.

BELSHAZZAR.

Diſpatch with ſpeed
A meſſage, to command the holy man,
To meet us on the inſtant.

NITOCRIS.

I already
Have ſent to aſk his preſence at the palace;
And, lo! he comes.

Enter DANIEL.

BELSHAZZAR.

Welcome, thrice venerable ſage! approach.
Art thou that Daniel, whom my great forefather
Brought hither with the captive tribes of Judah?

DANIEL.

I am that Daniel.

BEL-

BELSHAZZAR.

Pardon, holy Prophet;
Nor let a juſt reſentment of thy wrongs,
And long neglected merit, ſhut thy heart
Againſt a king's requeſt, a ſuppliant king!

DANIEL.

The God I worſhip teaches to forgive.

BELSHAZZAR.

Then let thy words bring comfort to my ſoul.
I've heard the ſpirit of the Gods is in thee;
That thou can'ſt look into the fates of men,
With preſcience more than human!

DANIEL.

Hold, O king!
Wiſdom is from above, 'tis God's own gift,
I of myſelf am nothing; but from Him
The little knowledge I poſſeſs, I hold:
To Him be all the glory!

BELSHAZZAR.

Then, O Daniel!
If thou indeed doſt boaſt that wond'rous gift,
That faculty divine; look there, and tell me!
O ſay, what mean thoſe myſtic characters?
Remove this load of terror from my ſoul!
And honours, ſuch as kings can give, await thee:
Thou ſhalt be great beyond thy ſoul's ambition,
And rich above thy wildeſt dream of wealth:
Clad in the ſcarlet robe our nobles wear,
And grac'd with princely enſigns, thou ſhalt ſtand
Near our own throne, and third within our empire.

DANIEL.

O mighty king! thy gifts with thee remain,
And let thy high rewards on others fall.
The princely enſign, nor the ſcarlet robe,
Nor yet to be the third within thy realm,
Can touch the ſoul of Daniel. Honour, fame,
All that the world calls great, thy crown itſelf,

Cou'd

Cou'd never ſatisfy the vaſt ambition
Of an immortal ſpirit, which aſpires
To an eternal crown, a crown of glory!

Firſt COURTIER. [*Aſide.*

Our prieſts teach no ſuch notions.

DANIEL.

Yet, O king!
Tho' all unmov'd by grandeur or by gift,
I will unfold the high decrees of Heav'n,
And ſtrait declare the myſtery.

BELSHAZZAR.

Speak, O Prophet!

DANIEL.

Prepare to hear, what kings have ſeldom heard;
Prepare to hear, what theſe have never told thee:
Prepare to hear the TRUTH. The mighty GOD,
Who rules the ſceptres and the hearts of kings,
Gave

Gave thy renown'd * forefather here to reign,
With ſuch extent of empire, weight of pow'r,
And greatneſs of dominion, the wide earth
Trembled beneath the terror of his name,
And kingdoms ſtood or fell as he decreed.
Oh! dangerous pinnacle of pow'r ſupreme!
Who can ſtand ſafe upon its treach'rous top,
Behold the gazing proſtrate world below,
Whom depth and diſtance into pigmies ſhrink,
And not grow giddy? Babylon's great king
Forgot he was a man, a helpleſs man,
Subject to pain, and ſin, and death, like others!
But who ſhall fight againſt Omnipotence?
Or who hath harden'd his obdurate heart
Againſt the Majeſty of Heav'n, and proſper'd?
The God he had inſulted was aveng'd;
From empire, from the joys of ſocial life,
He drove him forth; extinguiſh'd reaſon's lamp,

* Nebuchadnezzar.

Quench'd

Quench'd that bright ſpark of deity within;
Compell'd him, with the foreſt brutes, to roam
For ſcanty paſture; and the mountain dews
Fell, cold and wet, on his defenceleſs head:
Till he confeſs'd—Let men, let monarchs hear!—
Till he confeſs'd, PRIDE WAS NOT MADE FOR MAN!

NITOCRIS.

O, awful inſtance of divine diſpleaſure!

BELSHAZZAR.

Proceed! My ſoul is wrapt in fix'd attention!

DANIEL.

O king! thy grandſire not in vain had ſinn'd;
If, from his error, thou had'ſt learnt the truth.
The ſtory of his fall thou oft haſt heard,
But has it taught thee wiſdom? Thou, like him,
Haſt been elate with pow'r, and mad with pride.
Like him, thou haſt defy'd the living GOD.
Nay, to bold thoughts haſt added deeds more bold.

Thou

Thou haſt out-wrought the pattern he bequeath'd
thee,
And quite outgone example; haſt prophan'd,
With impious hand, the veſſels of the Temple:
Thoſe veſſels, ſanctified to holieſt uſe,
Thou haſt polluted with unhallow'd lips,
And made the inſtruments of foul debauch.
Thou haſt ador'd the gods of wood and ſtone,
Vile, ſenſeleſs deities, the work of hands,
But HE, THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF
LORDS,
In whom exiſts thy life, thy ſoul, thy breath,
On whom thy being hangs, thou haſt deny'd.

Firſt COURTIER.

[*Aſide to the others.*

With what an holy boldneſs he reproves him!

Second COURTIER.

Such is the fearleſs confidence of virtue!
And ſuch the righteous courage thoſe maintain,
Who plead the cauſe of truth! The ſmalleſt word
He utters, had been death to half the court.

BEL-

BELSHAZZAR.

Now let the myſtic writing be explain'd,
Thrice venerable ſage!

DANIEL.

O mighty king!
Hear then its awful import: *God has number'd*
Thy days of royalty, and *ſoon will end them.*
The All-wiſe has weigh'd thee in the even balance
Of his own holy law, and *finds thee wanting:*
And laſt, *Thy kingdom ſhall be wreſted from thee*;
And know, *the Mede and Perſian ſhall poſſeſs it.*

BELSHAZZAR.

[*He ſtarts up.*
Prophet, when ſhall this be?

DANIEL.

In God's own time:
Here my commiſſion ends; I may not utter
More than thou haſt heard; but O! remember,
king!
Thy days are number'd; hear, repent, and live!

BEL-

BELSHAZZAR.

Say, Prophet, what can penitence avail?
If Heav'n's decrees immutably are fix'd,
Can pray'rs avert our fate?

DANIEL.

They change our hearts,
And thus diſpoſe Omnipotence to mercy.
'Tis man that alters, GOD is ſtill the ſame.
Conditional are all Heav'n's covenants:
And when th' uplifted thunder is with-held,
'Tis pray'r that deprecates th' impending bolt.
Good * Hezekiah's days were number'd too;
But penitence and tears were mighty pleas:
At Mercy's throne they never plead in vain.
[*He is going.*

BELSHAZZAR.

Stay, Prophet, and receive thy promis'd gift;
The ſcarlet robe, and princely chain, are thine;

* 2 Chron. chap. xxxiii. Alſo, Iſaiah, chap. xxxviii.

And let my heralds publiſh through the land,
That Daniel ſtands, in dignity and pow'r,
The third in Babylon. Theſe juſt rewards
Thou well may'ſt claim, tho' ſad thy prophecy!

QUEEN.

Be not deceiv'd, my ſon! nor let thy ſoul
Snatch an uncertain moment's treach'rous reſt,
On the dread brink of that tremendous gulf
Which yawns beneath thee.

DANIEL.

O unhappy king!
Know what *muſt* happen once, *may* happen ſoon.
Remember, that 'tis terrible to meet
Great evils unprepar'd! and, O Belſhazzar!
In the wild moment of diſmay and death,
Remember thou waſt warn'd! and, O! remember,
Warnings deſpis'd are condemnations then!

[*Exeunt Daniel and Queen.*

BELSHAZZAR.

'Tis well—my ſoul ſhakes off its load of care:
'Tis only the obſcure is terrible.
Imagination frames events unknown,
In wild fantaſtic ſhapes of hideous ruin;
And what it fears, creates!—I know the worſt;
And awful is that worſt, as fear could feign:
But diſtant are the ills I have to dread!
What is remote may be uncertain too!
Ha! Princes! hope breaks in!—This may not be!

Firſt COURTIER.

Perhaps this Daniel is in league with Perſia;
And brib'd by Cyrus to report theſe horrors,
To weaken and impede the mighty plans
Of thy imperial mind!

BELSHAZZAR.

'Tis very like.

Second COURTIER.

Return we to the banquet.

BELSHAZZAR.

Dare we venture?

Third COURTIER.

Let not this dreaming Seer diſturb the king,
Againſt the pow'r of Cyrus, and the Mede,
Is Babylon ſecure. Her brazen gates
Mock all attempts to force them. Proud Euphrates,
A wat'ry bulwark, guards our ample city
From all aſſailants. And within the walls
Of this ſtupendous capital are lodg'd
Such vaſt proviſions, ſuch exhauſtleſs ſtores,
As a twice ten years ſiege could never waſte!

BELSHAZZAR.

[*Embraces him.*

My better genius! To the banquet then!

[*As they are going to reſume their places at the banquet, a dreadful uproar is heard, tumultuous cries, and warlike ſounds. All ſtand terrified. Enter ſoldiers, with their ſwords drawn, and wounded.*

SOLDIER.

SOLDIER.

Oh, helpleſs Babylon! Oh, wretched king!
Chaldea is no more, the Mede has conquer'd!
The victor Cyrus, like a mighty torrent,
Comes ruſhing on, and marks his way with ruin!

BELSHAZZAR.

Impoſſible! Villain and ſlave thou ly'ſt!
Euphrates and the brazen gates ſecure us.
While thoſe remain, Belſhazzar laughs at danger.

SOLDIER.

Euphrates is diverted from its courſe,
The brazen gates are burſt, the city's taken,
Thyſelf a pris'ner, and thy empire loſt.

BELSHAZZAR.

Oh, Prophet! I remember thee too ſoon!
[*He runs out. They follow, in the utmoſt confuſion.*

Enter ſeveral JEWS, MEDES, *and* BABYLONIANS.

Firſt JEW.

He comes, he comes! the long predicted prince,
Cyrus! the deſtin'd inſtrument of Heav'n,
To free our captive nation, and reſtore
JEHOVAH's Temple: Carnage marks his way,
And conqueſt ſits upon his plume-crown'd helm!

Second JEW.

What noiſe is that?

Firſt JEW.

Hark! 'tis Belſhazzar's voice!

BELSHAZZAR. [*Without.*

O Soldier! ſpare my life, and aid my flight;
Such treaſures ſhall reward the gentle deed,
As Perſia never ſaw? I'll be thy ſlave;
I'll yield my crown to Cyrus, I'll adore
His Gods and thine—I'll kneel and kiſs thy feet,

And

And worſhip thee—It is not much I aſk—
I'll live in bondage, beggary, and pain,
So thou but let me live!

SOLDIER.

Die, tyrant, die!

BELSHAZZAR.

O Daniel! Daniel! Daniel!

Enter SOLDIER.

SOLDIER.

Belſhazzar's dead!
The wretched king breath'd out his furious ſoul
In that tremendous groan.

Firſt JEW.

Belſhazzar's dead!
Then, Judah! art thou free! The tyrant's fall'n!
Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem is free!

BELSHAZZAR.

PART III.

Enter DANIEL *and* JEWS.

DANIEL.

BEL boweth down*, and haughty Nebo ſtoops!
The idols fall; the God and worſhipper
Together fall! together they bow down!
Each other, or themſelves, they cannot ſave.
O, Babylon! where is thy refuge now?
Thy wiſdom and thy knowledge, meant to ſave,

* Iſaiah, chap. xlvi.

Pervert

Pervert thee; and thy bleſſing is thy bane!
Where are thy bruti∫h deities, Chaldea?
Where are thy gods of gold?—Oh, Lord of life!
Thou very GOD! ſo fall thy foes before thee!

Firſt JEW.

So fell beneath the terrors of thy name
The idol Chemoſh, Moab's empty truſt;
So Ammoniti∫h Moloch ſunk before thee;
So fell Philiſtine Dagon: ſo ſhall fall,
To time's remoteſt period, all thy foes!

DANIEL.

Not for myſelf, O Judah! but for thee,
I ſhed theſe tears of joy. For I no more
Muſt view the cedars which adorn the brow
Of Syrian Lebanon; no more ſhall ſee
Thy pleaſant ſtream, O Jordan! nor the flocks,
Which whiten all the mountains of Judea;
Nor Carmel's heights, nor Sharon's flow'ry vales.
I muſt remain in Babylon! So Heav'n,

To

To whoſe awards I bow me, has decreed.
I ne'er ſhall ſee thee, Salem! I am old;
And few, and toilſome, are my days to come.
But we ſhall meet in thoſe celeſtial climes,
Compar'd with which created glories ſink:
Where ſinners ſhall have pow'r to harm no more,
And martyr'd Virtue reſts her weary head.
Tho' ere my day of promis'd grace ſhall come,
I ſhall be try'd by perils ſtrange and new;
Nor ſhall I taſte of death, ſo have I learn'd,
'Till I have ſeen the captive tribes reſtor'd.

Firſt JEW.

And ſhall we view, once more, thy hallow'd towers,
Imperial Salem?

DANIEL.

Yes, my youthful friends!
You ſhall behold the ſecond * temple riſe,
With grateful ecſtacy: but we, your ſires,

* Ezra, chap. i.

Now

Now bent with hoary age; we, whoſe charm'd eyes
Beheld the matchleſs glories of the firſt,
Shou'd weep, rememb'ring what we once had ſeen,
That model of perfection!

Second JEW.

Never more
Shall ſuch another ſtructure grace the earth!

DANIEL.

Well have you borne affliction, men of Judah!
Well have ſuſtain'd your portion of diſtreſs;
And, unrepining, drank the bitter dregs
Of adverſe fortune! Happier days await you.
O guard againſt the perils of ſucceſs!
Proſperity diſſolves the yielding ſoul,
And the bright ſun of ſhining fortune melts
The firmeſt virtue down. Beware, my friends,
Be greatly cautious of proſperity!
Defend your ſliding hearts; and, trembling, think
How thoſe, who buffeted affliction's waves

With

With vig'rous virtue, ſunk in Pleaſure's calm.
He *, who of ſpecial grace had been allow'd
To rear the hallow'd fane to Iſrael's God,
By wealth corrupted, and by eaſe debauch'd,
Forſook the God to whom he rais'd the fane;
And, ſunk in ſenſual ſloth, conſum'd his days,
In vile idolatrous rites!—Nor think, my ſons,
That virtue in ſequeſter'd *ſolitude*
Is always found. Within the inmoſt ſoul
The hidden tempter lurks; nor leſs betrays,
In the ſtill, ſeeming ſafety of retreat,
Than where the treach'rous world deluſive ſmiles.
Who thinks himſelf ſecure, is half undone;
For ſin, unwatch'd, may reach the ſanctuary:
No place preſerves us from it. Righteous Lot
Stemm'd the ſtrong current of corruption's tide,
Ev'n in polluted Sodom; ſafe he liv'd,
While circumſpective Virtue's watchful eye
Was anxiouſly awake: but in the ſhade,

* Solomon.

Far

Far from the threatn'ning perils which alarm
With viſible temptation, ſecret ſin
Enſnar'd him; in ſecurity he fell.

Second JEW.

Thy prudent counſels in our hearts ſhall live,
As if a pen of adamant had grav'd them.

Firſt JEW.

The dawn approaches; let us part, my friend,
Secure of peace, ſince tyranny is fall'n!

DANIEL.

So periſh all thine enemies, O LORD!
So mighty GOD! ſhall periſh all, who ſeek
Corrupted pleaſures in the turbid waves
Of life's polluted ſtream; and madly quit
The living fountain of perennial grace!

THE END.

DANIEL:

A

SACRED DRAMA.

The Righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the Wicked cometh in his ſtead. PROVERBS of SOLOMON.

On peut des plus grands rois ſurprendre la juſtice.
Incapable de tromper,
Ils ont peine a s'echapper
Des pieges de l'artifice.
Un cœur noble ne peut ſoup çonner en autrui
La baſſeſſe et la malice
Qu'il ne ſent point en lui.
ESTHER. TRAGEDIE de RACINE.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

DARIUS, King of MEDIA and BABYLON.

PHARNACES, } Courtiers, enemies to Daniel.
SORANUS, }

ARASPES, a young MEDIAN LORD, friend and convert to DANIEL.

DANIEL.

SCENE, The City of BABYLON.

☞ The ſubject of this Drama is taken from the Sixth Chapter of the Book of the Prophet Daniel.

DANIEL.

PART I.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

PHARNACES.

YES!—I have noted, with a jealous eye,
The pow'r of this new fav'rite! Daniel reigns,
And not Darius! Daniel guides the ſprings
Which move this mighty empire! High he ſits,
Supreme in favour both with prince and people!
Where is the ſpirit of our Median lords,
Tamely to crouch and bend the ſupple knee

To this new god? By Mithras, 'tis too much?
Shall great Arbaces' race to Daniel bow?
A foreigner, a captive, and a Jew?
Something muſt be devis'd, and that right ſoon,
To ſhake his credit.

SORANUS.

Rather hope to ſhake
The mountain pine, whoſe twiſting fibres claſp
The earth, deep rooted! Rather hope to ſhake
The Scythian Taurus from his central baſe!
No—Daniel ſits too abſolute in pow'r,
Too firm in favour, for the keeneſt ſhaft
Of nicely-aiming jealouſy to reach him.

PHARNACES.

Rather he ſits too high to ſit ſecurely.
Haſt thou then liv'd in courts? haſt thou grown grey,
Beneath the maſk a ſubtle ſtateſman wears
To hide his ſecret ſoul, and doſt not know
That, of all fickle Fortune's tranſient gifts,
Favour

Favour is moſt deceitful? 'Tis a beam,
Which darts uncertain brightneſs for a moment!
The faint, precarious, ſickly ſhine of pow'r;
Giv'n without merit, by caprice withdrawn.
No trifle is ſo ſmall as what obtains,
Save that which loſes it. It is a breath,
Which hangs upon a ſmile! A look, a word,
A frown, the air-built tow'r of favour ſhakes,
And down the unſubſtantial fabric falls!
Darius, juſt and clement as he is,
If I miſtake not, may be wrought upon
By prudent wiles, by Flattery's pleaſant cup,
Adminiſter'd with caution.

SORANUS.

But the means?
For Daniel's life (a foe muſt grant him that)
Is ſo replete with goodneſs, ſo adorn'd
With every virtue, ſo exactly ſquar'd
By wiſdom's niceſt rules, that 'twere moſt hard
To charge him with the ſhadow of offence.

Pure is his fame, as Scythia's mountain ſnows,
When not a breath pollutes them! O Pharnaces!
I've ſcann'd the actions of his daily life
With all the induſtrious malice of a foe;
And nothing meets mine eye but deeds of honour!
In office pure; for equitable acts
Renown'd: in juſtice and impartial truth,
The Grecian Themis is not more ſevere.

PHARNACES.

By yon' bright ſun, thou blazon'ſt forth his praiſe,
As if with rapture thou didſt read the page,
Where theſe fair deeds are written!

SORANUS.

Thou miſtak'ſt.
I only meant to ſhew, what cauſe we have
To hate and fear him. I but meant to paint
His popular virtues, and his dang'rous merit.
Then for devotion, and religious zeal,
Who ſo renown'd as Daniel? Of his law
Obſervant

Obſervant in th' extreme. Thrice ev'ry day,
With proſtrate rev'rence, he adores his God:
With ſuperſtitious awe his face he turns
Tow'rds his belov'd Jeruſalem; as if
Some local, partial God might there be found
To hear his ſupplication. No affair
Of ſtate; no buſineſs ſo importunate;
No pleaſure ſo alluring; no employ
Of ſuch high import, to ſeduce his zeal
From this obſervance due!

PHARNACES.

There, there he falls!
Enough, my friend! His piety deſtroys him.
There, at the very footſtool of his God,
Where he implores protection, there I'll cruſh
him!

SORANUS.

What means Pharnaces?

PHARNACES.

Aſk not what I mean.
The new idea floating in my brain,
Has yet receiv'd no form. 'Tis yet too ſoon
To give it body, circumſtance, or breath.
The ſeeds of mighty deeds are lab'ring here,
And ſtruggling for a birth! 'Tis near the hour
The king is wont to ſummon us to council.
Ere that, this big conception of my mind
I'll ſhape to form and being. Thou, meanwhile,
Convene our choſen friends; for I ſhall need
The aid of all your counſels, and the weight
Of grave authority.

SORANUS.

Who ſhall be truſted?

PHARNACES.

With our immediate motive, none except
A choſen band of friends, who moſt repine
At Daniel's exaltation. But the ſcheme
I medi-

I meditate, muſt be diſclos'd to all
Who bear high office; all our Median rulers,
Princes and captains, preſidents and lords;
All muſt aſſemble! 'Tis a common cauſe;
All but the young Araſpes, he inclines
To Daniel and his God. He ſits attent,
With raviſh'd ears, to liſten to his lore:
With rev'rence names Jeruſalem, and reads
The volume of the law! No more he bows,
To hail the golden Ruler of the Day;
But looks for ſome great Prophet, greater far,
So they pretend, than Mithras! From him, therefore,
Conceal whate'er of injury is devis'd
'Gainſt Daniel. Be it too thy care to-day,
To keep him from the council.

SORANUS.

'Tis well thought.
'Tis now about the hour of Daniel's pray'r,
Araſpes too is with him; and to-day
They will not ſit in council. Haſte we then!

Deſigns of high importance, once conceiv'd,
Shou'd be accompliſh'd. Genius to diſcern,
And courage to atchieve, deſpiſe the aid
Of ling'ring circumſpection. The keen ſpirit
Seizes the prompt occaſion, and at once
Plans and performs, reſolves and executes!

DANIEL.

PART II.

SCENE, DANIEL's Houſe.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

ARASPES.

PROCEED, proceed, thrice venerable ſage!
Enlighten my dark mind with this new ray,
This dawning of ſalvation! Tell me more
Of this expected King! this Prince of peace!
This Promiſe of the nations! this great Hope
Of anxious Iſraël! This mighty Prophet!

This

This Balm of Gilead, which ſhall heal the wounds
Of univerſal nature! this MESSIAH!
Redeemer, Saviour, ſufferer, victim, GOD;

DANIEL.

Enough to animate our faith, we know,
But not enough to ſoothe the curious pride
Of vain philoſophy! Were all reveal'd,
Hope wou'd have then no object, GOD no fear,
And faith no exerciſe! Enough to cheer
Our path we ſee, the reſt is hid in clouds;
And Heav'n's own ſhadows reſt upon the view!

ARASPES.

Go on, bleſt Sage! I cou'd for ever hear,
Untir'd, thy admonition! Tell me, how
I ſhall obtain the favour of that GOD
I but begin to know.

DANIEL.

By holy deeds,
By deep humility, by faith unfeign'd.
O Faith *, thou wonder-working principle!
Eternal ſubſtance of our preſent hope,
Thou evidence of things inviſible!
What cannot man ſuſtain, ſuſtain'd by thee?
The time wou'd fail, and the bright ſtar of day
Wou'd quench his beams in ocean, and reſign
His empire to the ſilver queen of night;
And ſhe again deſcend the ſteep of heav'n,
If I ſhou'd tell what wonders Faith atchiev'd,
By Gideon, Barak, and the ſapient ſeer,
Elkanah's ſon; the pious Gileadite,
Ill-fated Jephthah! He of † Zorah too,
In ſtrength unequall'd; and the ſhepherd-king,

* Hebrews, chap. xi. † Sampſon.

Who

Who ſlew the giant of Gath! Why ſhould I tell
Of holy Prophets, who, by conquering Faith,
Wrought deeds incredible to mortal ſenſe;
Vanquiſh'd contending kingdoms, quell'd the rage
Of furious peſtilence, extinguiſh'd fire?
Victorious Faith! others by thee endur'd
Exile, diſgrace, captivity, and death!
Some, uncomplaining, bore (nor be it deem'd
The meaneſt exerciſe of well-try'd Faith)
The bitter taunts of undeſerv'd reproach;
Deſpiſing ſhame, that death to human pride!

ARASPES.

How ſhall this faith be ſought?

DANIEL.

By earneſt pray'r,
Solicit firſt the wiſdom from above;
Wiſdom *, whoſe fruits are purity and peace!

---

* Wiſdom of Solomon, chap. vii.

Wiſdom!

Wiſdom! that bright intelligence, which ſat
Supreme, when with his golden * compaſſes
Th' Eternal plann'd the fabric of the world,
Produc'd his fair idea into light,
And ſaid, That all was good! Wiſdom, bleſt
beam!
The brightneſs of the everlaſting light!
The ſpotleſs mirror of the pow'r of GOD!
The reflex image of th' all-perfect mind!
A ſtream tranſlucent, flowing from the ſource
Of glory infinite; a cloudleſs light!
Defilement cannot touch, nor ſin pollute
Her unſtain'd purity! Not Ophir's gold,
Nor Ethiopia's gems can match her price!
The diamond of the mine is pale before her!
And, like the oil Eliſha's bounty bleſs'd,
She is a treaſure which doth grow by uſe,
And multiply by ſpending! She contains,
Within herſelf, the ſum of excellence,

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* See Paradiſe Loſt, book vii. line 225; alſo Proverbs, chap. viii. ver. 27.

If

If riches are deſir'd, wiſdom is wealth!
If prudence, where ſhall keen invention find
Artificer more cunning? If renown,
In her right-hand it comes! If piety,
Are not her labours virtues? If the lore
Which ſage experience teaches, lo! ſhe ſcans
Antiquity's dark truths; the paſt ſhe knows,
Anticipates the future; not by arts
Forbidden, of Chaldean ſorcerer;
But from the piercing ken of deep foreknowledge;
From her ſure ſcience of the human heart;
Weighing effects with cauſes, ends with means;
And from the probable the certain forms,
With palpable conjecture!

ARASPES.

Now, O Prophet!
Explain the ſecret doubts which rack my mind,
And my weak ſenſe confound. Give me ſome line
To ſound the depths of Providence! O ſay,
Why the ungodly proſper? why their root

Shoots

Shoots deep, and their thick branches flouriſh fair,
Like the green bay tree? why the righteous man,
Like tender plants, to ſhiv'ring winds expos'd,
Is ſtripp'd and torn, in naked virtue bare,
And nipp'd by cruel ſorrow's biting blaſt?
Explain, O Daniel! theſe myſterious ways,
To my faint apprehenſion! For as yet
I've much to learn. Fair Truth's immortal ſun
Is ſometimes hid in clouds; not that her light
Is in itſelf defective; but obſcur'd
By my weak prejudice, imperfect Faith,
And all the thouſand cauſes which obſtruct
The growth of virtue.

DANIEL.

Follow me, Araſpes!
Within, thou ſhalt peruſe the ſacred page,
The book of Life eternal! there thou wilt ſee
The END of the ungodly; thou wilt own
How ſhort their longeſt period; wilt perceive
How black a night ſucceeds their brighteſt day!

Weigh

Weigh well this book; and may the Spirit of Grace,
Who ſtamp'd the ſeal of truth on the bleſs'd page,
Deſcend into thy ſoul, remove thy doubts,
Clear the perplex'd, and ſolve the intricate,
Till Faith be loſt in ſight, and Hope in joy!

DANIEL:

PART III.

DARIUS *on his throne.* PHARNACES, SORANUS, PRINCES, PRESIDENTS and COURTIERS.

PHARNACES.

O King Darius, live for ever!

DARIUS.

Welcome!
Welcome, my princes, presidents and friends!

Now tell me, has your wiſdom ought deviſ'd
To ſerve the common wealth? In our new empire,
Subdued Chaldea, is there ought remains
Your prudence can ſuggeſt, to ſerve the ſtate,
To benefit the ſubject, to redreſs
And raiſe the injur'd? to aſſiſt th' oppreſs'd,
And humble the oppreſſor? If you know,
Speak freely, princes! Wherefore am I king,
Except to poiſe the awful ſcale of juſtice
With even hand; to miniſter to want,
To bleſs the nations with a lib'ral rule,
Vicegerent of th' eternal Oromaſdes!

PHARNACES.

So abſolute thy wiſdom, mighty king!
All counſel were ſuperfluous.

DARIUS.

Hold, Pharnaces!
No flatt'ry, prince, it is the death of virtue;
Who gives it is of all mankind the loweſt,

Save

Save he who takes it. Monarchs are but men;
As feeble and as frail as thoſe they rule,
And born like them, to die. The Lydian king,
Unhappy Crœſus! lately ſat aloft,
Almoſt above mortality; now ſee him,
Sunk to the vile condition of a ſlave,
He ſwells the train of Cyrus! I, like him,
To mis'ry am obnoxious. See this throne;
This very throne the great * Nebaſſar fill'd;
Yet hence his pride expell'd him! Yonder wall,
The dread terrific writing to the eyes
Of proud Belſhazzar ſhew'd; ſad monuments
Of Heav'n's tremendous vengeance! and ſhall I,
Unwarn'd by ſuch examples, cheriſh pride?
Yet to their dire calamities I owe
The brighteſt gem that gliſtens in my crown,
Sage Daniel. If my ſpeech have ought of worth,
Or if my life with ought of good be grac'd,
To him alone I owe it.

---

* Nebuchadnezzar.

SORANUS, [*Aſide to Pharnaces.*

Now, Pharnaces,
Will he run o'er, and dwell upon his praiſe,
As if we ne'er had heard it; nay, will ſwell
The nauſeous catalogue with many a virtue
His own fond fancy coins.

PHARNACES.

O, great Darius!
Let thine unworthy ſervant's words find grace;
And meet acceptance in his royal ear,
Who ſubjugates the Eaſt! Let not the king
With anger hear my pray'r.

DARIUS.

Pharnaces, ſpeak!
I know thou lov'ſt me; I but meant to chide
Thy flatt'ry, not reprove thee for thy zeal.
Speak boldly, friends, as man ſhou'd ſpeak to man,
Periſh the barb'rous maxims of the Eaſt,
Which baſely wou'd enſlave the free-born mind,

And

And plunder it of the beſt gift of Heav'n,
Its liberty!

PHARNACES.

Then, O Darius, hear me!
Thy princes, and the captains of thy bands,
Thy preſidents, the governors who rule
Thy provinces, and I, thine humble creature,
(Leſs than the leaſt in merit, but in love,
In zeal, and duty, equal with the firſt);
We have deviſ'd a meaſure to confirm
Thy infant empire; to eſtabliſh here
Thy pow'r with firm dominion, and ſecure
Thy growing greatneſs paſt the pow'r of change.

DARIUS.

I am prepar'd to hear thee. Speak, Pharnaces!

PHARNACES.

The wretched Babylonians long have groan'd
Beneath the rule of princes, weak or raſh.
The rod of pow'r was falſely ſway'd alike,
By feeble Merodach, and fierce Belſhazzar.
One let the ſlacken'd reins too looſely float

Upon the people's neck, and loſt his pow'r
By nerveleſs relaxation. He, who follow'd,
Held with a tyrant's hand the cruel curb,
And check'd the groaning nation till it bled.
On diff'rent rocks they met one common ruin.
Their edicts were irreſolute, their laws
Were feebly plann'd, their councils ill adviſ'd;
Now ſo relax'd, and now ſo overſtrain'd,
That the tir'd people, wearied with the weight
They long have borne, will ſoon diſdain controul,
Tread on all rule, and ſpurn the hand that guides 'em.

DARIUS.

But ſay what remedy?

PHARNACES.

That too, O king!
Thy ſervants have provided. Hitherto
They bear the yoke ſubmiſſive. But to fix
Thy pow'r, and their obedience; to reduce
All hearts to thy dominion, yet avoid

Thoſe

Thoſe deeds of cruelty thy nature ſtarts at—
Thou ſhou'd'ſt begin by ſome imperial act
Of abſolute dominion, yet unſtain'd
By ought of barbarous. For know, O king!
Wholeſome ſeverity, if wiſely rul'd
With ſober diſcipline, procures reſpect
More than the lenient counſels and weak meaſures
Of frail irreſolution.

DARIUS.

Now proceed
To thy requeſt.

PHARNACES.

Not I, but all requeſt it.
Be thy imperial edict iſſued ſtrait,
And let a firm decree be this day paſs'd,
Irrevocable, as our Median laws
Ordain, that for the ſpace of thirty days,
No ſubject in thy realm ſhall ought requeſt
Of God, or man, except of thee, O king!

DARIUS.

Wherefore this ſtrange decree?

PHARNACES.

'Twill fix the crown
With laſting ſafety on thy royal brow;
And by a bloodleſs means preſerve th' obedience
Of this new empire. Think how much 'twill raiſe
Thy high renown! 'Twill make thy name rever'd,
And popular beyond example. What!
To be as Heav'n, diſpenſing good and ill
For thirty days! With thine own ears to hear
Thy people's wants, with thine own lib'ral hands
To bleſs thy ſuppliant ſubjects! O, Darius!
Thou'lt ſeem as bounteous as a giving God!
And reign in ev'ry heart in Babylon,
As well as Media. What a glorious ſtate,
To be the bleſſed arbiter of good;
The firſt efficient cauſe of happineſs!

To

To ſcatter mercies with a plenteous hand,
And to be bleſt thyſelf in bleſſing others!

DARIUS.

Is this the gen'ral wiſh?

[*The Princes and Courtiers kneel.*

Chief PRESIDENT.

Of one, of all.
Behold thy princes, preſidents, and lords,
Thy counſellors and captains! See, O king!
[*Preſenting the Edict.*
Behold the inſtrument our zeal has drawn:
The edict is prepar'd. We only wait
The confirmation of thy gracious word,
And thy imperial ſignet.

DARIUS.

Say, Pharnaces,
What penalty awaits the man who dares
Tranſgreſs our mandate?

PHAR-

PHARNACES.

Inſtant death, O king!
This ſtatute ſays, "Shou'd any ſubject dare
"Petition, for the ſpace of thirty days,
"Of God, or man, except of thee, O king!
"He ſhall be thrown into yon' dreadful den
"Of hungry lions!"

DARIUS.

Hold! Methinks a deed
Of ſuch importance ſhou'd be wiſely weigh'd.

PHARNACES.

We have revolv'd it, mighty king, with care,
With cloſeſt ſcrutiny.

DARIUS.

I'm ſatisfy'd.
Then to your wiſdom I commit me, princes!
Behold the royal ſignet, ſee, 'tis done!

PHAR-

PHARNACES. [*Aſide.*

There Daniel fell! That ſignet ſeal'd his doom!

DARIUS. [*After a pauſe.*

Let me reflect—Sure I have been too raſh!
Why ſuch intemperate haſte? But you are wiſe;
And wou'd not counſel this ſevere decree
But for the wiſeſt purpoſe. Yet, methinks,
I might have weigh'd, and in my mind revolv'd
This ſtatute, ere, the royal ſignet ſtamp'd,
It had been paſt repeal! Sage Daniel too!
My counſellor, my venerable friend,
He ſhou'd have been conſulted; for his wiſdom
I ſtill have found oracular.

PHARNACES.

Mighty king!
'Tis as it ſhou'd be! The decree is paſt
Irrevocable,

Irrevocable, as the ſteadfaſt law
Of Mede and Perſian, which can never change.
Thoſe who obſerve it live, as is moſt meet,
High in thy grace; who violate it, die.

DANIEL.

PART IV.

SCENE, DANIEL's Houſe.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

ARASPES.

OH, holy Daniel! prophet, father, friend!
I come, the wretched meſſenger of ill!
Thy foes complot thy death. For what can mean
This new-made law, extorted from the king,
Almoſt by force? What can it mean, O Daniel!

But

But to involve thee in the toils they ſpread
To ſnare thy precious life?

DANIEL.

How! was the king
Conſenting to this edict?

ARASPES.

They ſurpris'd
His eaſy nature; took him when his heart
Was ſoften'd by their blandiſhments! They wore
The maſk of public virtue to deceive him.
Beneath the ſpecious name of general good,
They wrought him to their purpoſes: no time
Allow'd him to delib'rate. One ſhort hour,
Another moment, and his ſoul had gain'd
Her natural tone of virtue.

DANIEL.

That great Pow'r
Who ſuffers evil, only to produce
Some unſeen good, permits that this ſhou'd be:
And,

And, HE permitting, I, well pleas'd, reſign!
Retire, my friend! This is my ſecond hour
Of daily pray'r. Anon we'll meet again!
Here, in the open face of that bright ſun
Thy fathers worſhipp'd, will I offer up,
As is my rule, petition to our GOD,
For thee, for me, for Solyma, for all!

ARASPES.

Oh, ſtay! what mean'ſt thou! ſure thou haſt not heard
The edict of the king? I thought, but now,
Thou knew'ſt its purport. It expreſsly ſays,
That no petition henceforth ſhall be made,
For thirty days, ſave only to the king;
Nor pray'r nor interceſſion ſhall be heard
Of any God, or man, but of Darius.

DANIEL.

And think'ſt thou then my rev'rence for the king,
Good as he is, ſhall tempt me to renounce
My ſworn allegiance to the King of kings?

Haſt

Haſt thou commanded legions, tempted death
In various ſhapes, and ſhrink'ſt at danger now?
Come, learn of me; I'll teach thee to be bold,
Tho' ſword I never drew! Fear not, Araſpes,
The feeble vengeance of a mortal man,
Whoſe breath is in his noſtrils; for wherein
Is he to be accounted of? but fear
The awaken'd vengeance of the living LORD;
He who can plunge the everlaſting ſoul
In infinite perdition!

ARASPES.

Then, O Daniel!
If thou perſiſt to diſobey the edict,
Retire and hide thee from the prying eyes
Of buſy malice!

DANIEL.

He who is aſham'd
To vindicate the honour of his GOD,
Of him the living LORD ſhall be aſham'd
When he ſhall judge the tribes!

ARAS-

ARASPES.

Yet, O remember,
Oft have I heard thee ſay, the ſecret heart
Is fair Devotion's Temple; there the ſaint,
Ev'n on that living altar, lights the flame
Of pureſt ſacrifice, which burns unſeen,
Not unaccepted.—I remember too,
When Syrian Naaman *, by Eliſha's hand,
Was cleans'd from foul pollution, and his mind,
Enlighten'd by the miracle, confeſs'd
The Almighty GOD of Jacob, that he deem'd it,
No flagrant violation of his faith,
To bend at Rimmon's ſhrine; nor did the Seer
Forbid the rite external.

DANIEL.

Know, Araſpes,
Heav'n deigns to ſuit our trials to our ſtrength!

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* 2 Kings, chap. v.

A recent convert, feeble in his faith,
Naaman, perhaps, had ſunk beneath the weight
Of ſo ſevere a duty. But ſhall I,
Shall Daniel, ſhall the ſervant of the Lord,
A vet'ran in his cauſe; one train'd to know,
And do his will; one exercis'd in woe,
Bred in captivity, and born to ſuffer;
Shall I, from known, from certain duty ſhrink
To ſhun a threaten'd danger? O, Araſpes!
Shall I, advanc'd in age, in zeal decline?
Grow careleſs as I reach my journey's end?
And ſlacken in my pace, the goal in view?
Periſh diſcretion, when it interferes
With duty! Periſh the ſafe policy
Of human wit, where GOD's eternal name
Is put in competition! Shall his law
Be ſet at nought, that I may live at eaſe?
How wou'd the heathen triumph, ſhou'd I fall
Thro' coward fear! How wou'd GOD's enemies
Inſultingly blaſpheme!

ARASPES.

ARASPES.

Yet think a moment.

DANIEL.

No!——

Where evil may be *done*, 'tis right to ponder;
Where only *ſuffer'd*, know, the ſhorteſt pauſe
Is much too long. Had great Darius paus'd,
This ill had been prevented. But for me,
Araſpes! to deliberate is to ſin.

ARASPES.

Think of thy pow'r, thy favour with Darius:
Think of thy life's importance to the tribes,
Scarce yet return'd in ſafety. Live! O, live!
To ſerve the cauſe of GOD!

DANIEL.

GOD will ſuſtain
Himſelf his righteous cauſe. He knows to raiſe
Fit inſtruments to ſerve him. As for me,

The ſpacious earth holds not a bait to tempt me.
What wou'd it profit me, if I ſhou'd gain
Imperial Ecbatan, th' extended land
Of fruitful Media, nay, the world's wide round,
If my eternal ſoul muſt be the price?
Farewell, my friend! time preſſes. I have ſtol'n
Some moments from my duty, to confirm,
And ſtrengthen thy young faith! Let us fulfil
What Heav'n enjoins, and leave to Heav'n th' event!

DANIEL:

PART V.

SCENE, The Palace.

PHARNACES, SORANUS.

PHARNACES.

'TIS done—ſucceſs has crown'd our ſcheme,
Soranus;
And Daniel falls into the deep-laid toils
Our prudence ſpread.

SORANUS.

That he ſhou'd fall ſo ſoon,
Aſtoniſhes ev'n me! What! not a day,

No, not a ſingle moment to defer
His raſh devotions? Madly thus to ruſh
On certain peril quite tranſcends belief!
When happen'd it, Pharnaces?

PHARNACES.

On the inſtant:
Scarce is the deed accompliſh'd. As he made
His oſtentatious pray'r, ev'n in the face
Of the bright God of day, all Babylon
Beheld the inſult offer'd to Darius.
For, as in bold defiance of the law,
His windows were not clos'd. Our choſen bands,
Whom we had plac'd to note him, ſtrait ruſh'd in,
And ſeiz'd him in the warmth of his blind zeal,
Ere half his pray'r was finiſh'd. Young Araſpes,
With all the wild extravagance of grief,
Prays, weeps, and threatens. Daniel ſilent ſtands,
With patient reſignation, and prepares
To follow them.—But ſee! the king approaches!

SORA-

SORANUS.

How's this? deep ſorrow ſits upon his brow!
And ſtern reſentment fires his angry eye!

DARIUS, PHARNACES, SORANUS.

DARIUS.

O, deep-laid ſtratagem! O, artful wile!
To take me unprepar'd, to wound my heart,
Ev'n where it feels moſt tenderly, in friendſhip!
To ſtab my fame! to hold me up a mark
To future ages, for the perjur'd prince,
Who ſlew the friend he lov'd! O Daniel! Daniel!
Who now ſhall truſt Darius? Not a ſlave
Within my empire, from the Indian main
To the cold Caſpian, but is more at eaſe
Than I, his monarch! I have done a deed
Will blot my honour with eternal ſtain!
Pharnaces! O, thou hoary ſycophant!
Thou wily politician! thou haſt ſnar'd
Thy unſuſpecting maſter?

PHARNACES.

Great Darius!
Let not reſentment blind thy royal eyes.
In what am I to blame? who cou'd foreſee
This obſtinate reſiſtance to the law?
Who cou'd foreſee that Daniel wou'd, perforce,
Oppoſe the king's decree?

DARIUS.

Thou, thou foreſaw'ſt it!
Thou knew'ſt his righteous ſoul wou'd ne'er endure
So long an interval of pray'r. But I,
Deluded king! 'Twas I ſhou'd have foreſeen
His ſtedfaſt piety. I ſhou'd have thought,
Your earneſt warmth had ſome more ſelfiſh ſource,
Something that touch'd you nearer, than your love,
Your counterfeited zeal for me.—Thou knew'ſt
How dear I held him; how I priz'd his truth!
Did I not chuſe him from a ſubject world,
Unbleſs'd by fortune, and by birth ungrac'd,
A cap-

A captive and a Jew? and yet I lov'd him!
Was he not rich in independent worth?
There, there he fell! If he had been leſs great,
He had been ſafe. Thou cou'dſt not bear his
brightneſs;
The luſtre of his virtues quite obſcur'd,
And dimm'd thy fainter merit. Raſh old man!
Go, and deviſe ſome means to ſet me free
From this dread load of guilt! Go, ſet at work
Thy plotting genius to redeem the life
Of venerable Daniel!

PHARNACES.

'Tis too late.
He has offended 'gainſt the new decree;
Has dar'd to make petition to his God,
Altho' the dreadful ſentence of the act
Full well he knew. And by th' eſtabliſh'd law
Of Media, by that law irrevocable,
Which he has dar'd to violate, he dies!

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

Impiety! preſumption! monſtrous pride!—
Irrevocable? Is there ought on earth
Deſerves that name? Th' eternal laws alone
Of Oromaſdes claim it. But, alas!
All human projects are ſo faintly fram'd,
So feebly plann'd, ſo liable to change,
So mix'd with error in their very form,
That mutable and mortal are the ſame.
But where is Daniel? Wherefore comes he not
To load me with reproaches? to upbraid me
With all the wrongs my barb'rous haſte has done him!
Where is he?

PHARNACES.

He prepares to meet his fate.
This hour he dies, for ſo the act decrees.

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

Suſpend the bloody ſentence! bring him hither!
Or rather let me ſeek him, and implore
His dying pardon, and his parting pray'r.

DANIEL.

PART VI.

SCENE, DANIEL's Houſe.

DANIEL, ARASPES.

ARASPES.

STILL let me follow thee; ſtill let me hear
The voice of Wiſdom, ere the ſilver cord
By Death's cold hand be looſen'd.

DANIEL.

Now I'm ready!
No grief; no woman's weakneſs, good Araſpes!
Thou

Thou ſhoud'ſt rejoice my pilgrimage is o'er,
And the bleſt haven of repoſe in view.

ARASPES.

And muſt I loſe thee, Daniel? muſt thou die?

DANIEL.

And what is death, my friend, that I ſhou'd fear it?
To die! why 'tis to triumph; 'tis to join
The great aſſembly of the good and juſt;
Immortal worthies, heroes, prophets, ſaints!
Oh! 'tis to join the band of holy men,
Made perfect by their ſuff'rings! 'Tis to meet
My great progenitors! 'Tis to behold
Th' illuſtrious Patriarchs; they, with whom the Lord
Deign'd hold familiar converſe! 'Tis to ſee
Bleſs'd Noah and his children, once a world!
'Tis to behold (oh! rapture to conceive!)
Thoſe we have known, and lov'd, and loſt, below!
Bold Azariah, and the band of brothers,
Who fought, in bloom of youth, the ſcorching flames!

Nor

Nor is it to behold heroic men
Alone, who fought the fight of faith on earth;
But heav'nly conquerors, angelic hoſts,
Michael and his bright legions, who ſubdued
The foes of Truth! To join their bleſt employ
Of love and praiſe! to the high melodies
Of choirs celeſtial to attune my voice,
Accordant to the golden harps of ſaints!
To join in bleſt Hoſannahs to their King!
Whoſe face to ſee, whoſe glory to behold,
Alone were heav'n, tho' ſaint or ſeraph none
There were beſide, and only HE were there!
This is to die! Who wou'd not die for this?
Who wou'd not die, that he might live for ever?

DARIUS, DANIEL, ARASPES.

DARIUS.

Where is he? where is Daniel? Let me ſee him!
Let me embrace that venerable form,
Which I have doom'd to glut the greedy maw
Of furious lions!

DANIEL.

DANIEL.

King Darius, hail!

DARIUS.

O, injur'd Daniel! can I ſee thee thus?
Thus uncomplaining? can I bear to hear
That when the ruffian miniſters of death
Stopp'd thy unfiniſh'd pray'r, thy pious lips
Had juſt invok'd a bleſſing on Darius,
On him who ſought thy life? Thy murd'rers dropt
Tears of ſtrange pity. Look not on me thus,
With mild benignity! Oh! I cou'd bear
The voice of keen reproach, or the ſtrong flaſh
Of fierce reſentment; but I cannot ſtand
That touching ſilence, nor that patient eye
Of meek reſpect.

DANIEL.

Thou art my maſter ſtill.

DARIUS.

I am thy murd'rer! I have ſign'd thy death!

DANIEL.

DANIEL.

I know thy bent of ſoul is honourable:
Thou haſt been gracious ſtill! Had it been other-
wiſe,
I wou'd have met th' appointment of high Heav'n
With humble acquieſcence; but to know,
Thy will concurr'd not with thy ſervant's fate,
Adds joy to reſignation.

DARIUS.

Here I ſwear,
By him who ſits inthron'd in yon' bright ſun,
Thy blood ſhall be aton'd! On theſe, thy foes,
Thou ſhalt have ample vengeance.

DANIEL.

Hold, O king!
Vengeance is mine, th' eternal LORD has ſaid;
And I will recompence, with even hand,
The ſinner for the ſin. The wrath of man
Works not the righteouſneſs of GOD.

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

I had hop'd
We ſhou'd have trod this buſy ſtage together,
A little longer; then have ſunk to reſt,
In honourable age! Who now ſhall guide
My ſhatter'd bark in ſafety? who ſhall now
Direct me? O, unhappy ſtate of kings!
'Tis well the robe of majeſty is gay,
Or who wou'd put it on? A crown! what is it?
It is to bear the mis'ries of a people!
To hear their murmurs, feel their diſcontents,
And ſink beneath a load of ſplendid care!
To have your beſt ſucceſs aſcrib'd to Fortune,
And Fortune's failures all aſcrib'd to you!
It is to ſit upon a joyleſs height,
To every blaſt of changing fate expos'd!
Too high for hope! too great for happineſs!
For friendſhip too much fear'd! To all the joys
Of ſocial freedom, and th' endearing charm
Of lib'ral interchange of ſoul unknown!

Fate meant me an exception to the reſt,
And, tho' a monarch, bleſs'd me with a friend;
And I—have murder'd him!

DANIEL.

My hour approaches!
Hate not my mem'ry, king, protect Araſpes.
Encourage Cyrus in the holy work
Of building ruin'd Solyma. Farewell!

DARIUS.

With moſt religious ſtrictneſs I'll fulfil
Thy laſt requeſt. Araſpes ſhall be next
My throne and heart. Farewell! [*They embrace.*
Hear, future kings!
Ye unborn rulers of the nations hear!
Learn from my crime, from my misfortunes learn,
Never to truſt to weak, or wicked hands,
That delegated pow'r, which Oromaſdes
Inveſts in monarchs for the public good.

DANIEL.

PART VII.

SCENE, The Court of the Palace.

[*The ſun riſing.*

DARIUS, ARASPES.

DARIUS.

OH, good Araſpes! what a night of horror!
To me the dawning day brings no return
Of cheerfulneſs or peace! No balmy ſleep
Has ſeal'd theſe eyes, no nouriſhment has paſt
Theſe loathing lips, ſince Daniel's fate was ſign'd!

Hear what my fruitleſs penitence reſolves—
The thirty days my raſhneſs had decreed
The edict's force ſhou'd laſt, I will devote
To mourning and repentance, faſting, pray'r,
And all due rites of grief. For thirty days,
No pleaſant ſound of dulcimer or harp,
Sackbut, or flute, or pſaltery ſhall charm
My ear, now dead to ev'ry note of joy!

ARASPES.

My grief can know no period!

DARIUS.

See that den!
There Daniel met the furious lion's rage!
There were the patient martyr's mangled limbs
Torn piece-meal! Never hide thy tears, Araſpes;
'Tis virtuous ſorrow, unallay'd like mine
By guilt and fell remorſe! Let us approach.
Who knows but that dread Pow'r to whom he pray'd
So often and ſo fervently, has heard him!

[*He goes to the mouth of the den.*

O, Da-

O, Daniel, ſervant of the living God!
He whom thou haſt ſerv'd ſo long, and lov'd ſo well,
From the devouring lions' famiſh'd jaw,
Can he deliver thee?

DANIEL. [*From the bottom of the den.*

He can, he has!

DARIUS.

Methought, I heard him ſpeak!

ARASPES.

O, wond'rous force
Of ſtrong imagination! were thy voice
Loud as the trumpet's blaſt, it cou'd not wake him
From that eternal ſleep!

DANIEL. [*In the den.*

Hail! king Darius!
The God I ſerve has ſhut the lions' mouth,
To vindicate my innocence.

DARIUS.

He ſpeaks!
He lives!

ARASPES.

'Tis no illuſion: 'tis the ſound
Of his known voice.

DARIUS.

Where are my ſervants? haſte,
Fly ſwift as light'ning, free him from the den,
Releaſe him, bring him hither! Break the ſeal
Which keeps him from me! See, Araſpes! look!
See the charm'd lions!—Mark their mild demeanor;
Araſpes, mark!—they have no pow'r to hurt him!
See how they hang their heads, and ſmooth their fierceneſs,
At his mild aſpect!

ARASPES.

Who that ſees this ſight,
Who that in after-times ſhall hear this told,
Can doubt if Daniel's God be GOD indeed?

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

None, none, Araſpes!

ARASPES.

Ah! he comes; he comes!

Enter DANIEL, *followed by multitudes.*

DANIEL.

Hail, great Darius!

DARIUS.

Doſt thou live indeed?
And live unhurt?

ARASPES.

O, miracle of joy!

DARIUS.

I ſcarce can truſt my eyes! How didſt thou
'ſcape?

DANIEL.

That bright and glorious Being, who vouchſaf'd
Preſence divine, when the three martyr'd brothers
Eſſay'd the caldron's flame, ſupported me!
Ev'n in the furious lions' dreadful den,
The priſoner of hope, even there I turn'd
To the ſtrong hold, the bulwark of my ſtrength,
Ready to hear, and mighty to redeem!

DARIUS. [*To Araſpes.*

Where is Pharnaces? Take the hoary traitor;
Take too Soranus, and the chief abettors
Of this dire edict: Let not one eſcape.
The puniſhment their deep-laid hate devis'd
For holy Daniel, on their heads ſhall fall
With tenfold vengeance. To the lions' den
I doom his vile accuſers! All their wives,
Their children too, ſhall ſhare one common fate!
Take care that none eſcape—Go, good Araſpes.

DANIEL,

DANIEL. [*Araſpes goes out.*

Not ſo, Darius,
O ſpare the guiltleſs; ſpare the guilty too!
Where ſin is not, to puniſh were unjuſt;
And where ſin is, O king! there fell remorſe
Supplies the place of puniſhment!

DARIUS.

No more!
My word is paſt! Not one requeſt, ſave this,
Shalt thou e'er make in vain. Approach, my friends,
Araſpes has already ſpread the tale,
And ſee, what crowds advance.

PEOPLE.

Long live Darius!
Long like great Daniel too, the people's friend!

DARIUS.

Draw near, my ſubjects. See this holy man!
Death had no pow'r to harm him. Yon' fell band

Of

Of famiſh'd lions, ſoften'd at his ſight,
Forgot their nature, and grew tame before him.
The mighty GOD protects his ſervants thus!
The righteous thus he reſcues from the ſnare
Of death; while fraud's artificer ſhall fall
In the deep gulf his wily arts deviſe,
To ſnare the innocent!

A COURTIER.

To the ſame den
Araſpes bears Pharnaces and his friends;
Fall'n is their inſolence! With prayers and tears,
And all the meanneſs of high-creſted pride,
When adverſe fortune frowns, they beg for life.
Araſpes will not hear. "You heard not me,
He cries, when I for Daniel's life implor'd;
His God protected him! ſee now, if yours
Will liſten to your cries?"

DARIUS.

Now hear,
People and nations! languages and realms,
O'er

O'er whom I rule! Peace be within your walls!
That I may baniſh from the minds of men
The raſh decree gone out; hear me reſolve
To counteract its force by one more juſt.
In ev'ry kingdom of my wide-ſtretch'd realm,
From fair Chaldea to th' extremeſt bound
Of northern Media, be my edict ſent,
And this my ſtatute known. My heralds haſte,
And ſpread my royal mandate through the land,
That all my ſubjects bow the ready knee
To Daniel's GOD—for he alone is LORD.
Let all adore, and tremble at his name,
Who ſits in glory unapproachable
Above the heav'ns—above the heav'n of heavens!
His pow'r is everlaſting; and his throne,
Founded in equity and truth, ſhall laſt
Beyond the bounded reign of time and ſpace,
Thro' wide eternity! With his right-arm
He ſaves, and who oppoſes? He defends,
And who ſhall injure? In the perilous den

He

He reſcued Daniel from the lion's mouth!
His common deeds are wonders, and his works
One ever-during chain of miracles!

Enter ARASPES.

ARASPES.

All hail, O king! Darius live for ever!
May all thy foes be as Pharnaces is!

DARIUS.

Araſpes, ſpeak!

ARASPES.

O, let me ſpare the tale!—
'Tis full of horror! Dreadful was the fight!
The hungry lions, greedy for their prey,
Devoured the wretched princes, ere they reach'd
The bottom of the den.

DARIUS.

DARIUS.

Now, now confeſs,
'Twas ſome ſuperior hand reſtrain'd their rage,
And tam'd their furious appetites.

PEOPLE.

'Tis true,
The God of Daniel is a mighty GOD!
He ſaves, and he deſtroys.

ARASPES.

O, friend! O, Daniel!
No wav'ring doubts can ever more diſturb
My ſettled faith.

DANIEL.

To GOD be all the glory!

THE END.

REFLECTIONS

OF

KING HEZEKIAH,

IN HIS SICKNESS.

Set thine houſe in order, for thou ſhalt die.

ISAIAH, xxxviii.

REFLECTIONS
OF
KING HEZEKIAH,
IN HIS SICKNESS.

WHAT, and no more?—Is this my ſoul, ſaid I,
My whole of being?—Muſt I ſurely die?
Be robb'd at once of health, of ſtrength, of time,
Of youth's fair promiſe, and of pleaſure's prime?
Shall I no more behold the face of morn,
The cheerful day-light, and the ſpring's return?
Muſt I the feſtive bow'r, the banquet leave,
For the dull chambers of the darkſome grave?

Have I conſider'd what it is to die?
In native duſt with kindred worms to lie;
To ſleep in cheerleſs cold neglect; to rot;
My body loath'd, my very name forgot!
Not one of all thoſe paraſites, who bend
The ſupple knee, their monarch to attend!
What, not one friend! No, not an hireling ſlave,
Shall hail GREAT HEZEKIAH in the grave!
Where's he, who falſely claim'd the name of *Great?*
Whoſe eye was terror, and whoſe frown was fate;
Who aw'd an hundred nations from the throne?
See where he lies, dumb, friendleſs, and alone!
Which grain of duſt proclaims the noble birth?
Which is the royal particle of earth?
Where are the marks, the princely enſigns where?
Which is the ſlave, and which great David's heir?
Alas! the beggar's aſhes are not known
From his, who lately ſat on Iſrael's throne!

How ſtands my great account? My ſoul, ſurvey
The debt ETERNAL JUSTICE bids thee pay!

Shou'd

Shou'd I frail Memory's records ſtrive to blot,
Will Heav'n's tremendous reck'ning be forgot?
Can I, alas! the awful volume tear?
Or raze one page of the dread regiſter?

"*Prepare thy houſe, thy heart in order ſet;*
"*Prepare, the Judge of Heaven and Earth to meet.*"
So ſpake the warning Prophet.—Awful words!
Which fearfully my troubled ſoul records.
Am I prepar'd? and *can* I meet my doom,
Nor ſhudder at the dreaded wrath to come?
Is all in order ſet, my houſe, my heart?
Does no beſetting ſin ſtill claim a part?
Does no one cheriſh'd vice, with ling'ring pace,
Reluctant, leave me to the work of grace?
Did I each day for this great day prepare,
By righteous deeds, by ſin-ſubduing pray'r?
Did I each night, each day's offence repent,
And each unholy thought and word lament?
Still have theſe ready hands th' afflicted fed,
And miniſtred to Want her daily bread?

The cauſe, I knew not, did I well explore!
Friend, advocate, and parent of the poor?
Did I, to gratify ſome ſudden guſt
Of thoughtleſs appetite; ſome impious luſt
Of pleaſure or of power, ſuch ſums employ
As wou'd have crown'd pale penury with joy?
Did I in groves forbidden altars raiſe,
Or molten Gods adore, or idols praiſe?
Did my firm faith to Heav'n ſtill point the way?
Did charity to man my actions ſway?
Did meek-ey'd Patience all my ſteps attend?
Did gen'rous Candour mark me for her friend?
Did I unjuſtly ſeek to build my name
On the pil'd ruins of another's fame?
Did I, like hell, abhor th' inſidious lie,
The low deceit, th' unmanly calumny?
Did my fix'd ſoul the impious wit deteſt?
Did my firm virtue ſcorn th' unhallow'd jeſt;
The ſneer profane, and the poor ridicule
Of ſhallow Infidelity's dull ſchool?

Did

Did I ſtill live as born one day to die,
And view the eternal world with conſtant eye?

If ſo I liv'd, if ſo I kept thy word,
In mercy view, in mercy hear me, LORD!
My holieſt deeds *indulgence* will require,
The beſt but to *forgiveneſs* will aſpire;
If Thou my pureſt ſervices regard,
'Twill be with pardon only, not reward.

How imperfection's ſtamp'd on all below!
How ſin intrudes in all we ſay or do!
How late in all the inſolence of health,
I charm'd th' Aſſyrian * by my boaſt of wealth!
How fondly, with elab'rate pomp, diſplay'd
My glitt'ring treaſures! with what triumph laid
My gold and gems before his dazzled eyes,
And found a rich reward in his ſurpriſe?

---

* This is an anachroniſm. Hezekiah did not ſhew his treaſures to the Aſſyrian till after his recovery from his ſickneſs.

O, mean of ſoul! can wealth elate the heart,
Which of the man himſelf is not a part?
O, poverty of pride! O, foul diſgrace!
Diſguſted Reaſon, bluſhing, hides her face.
Mortal, and proud! ſtrange contradicting terms!
Pride for death's victim, for the prey of worms!
Of all the wonders which th' eventful life
Of man preſents; of all the mental ſtrife
Of warring paſſions; all the raging fires
Of furious appetites, and mad deſires,
Not one ſo ſtrange appears as this alone,
That man is proud of what is not his own.

How ſhort is human life! the very breath,
Which frames my words, accelerates my death.
Of this ſhort life how large a portion's fled!
To what is gone I am already dead;
As dead to all my years and minutes paſt,
As I, to what remains, ſhall be at laſt.
Can I my cares and pains ſo far forget,
To view my vaniſh'd years with fond regret?

Can

Can I again my worn-out fancy cheat?
Indulge freſh hope? ſolicit new deceit?
Of all the vanities weak man admires,
Which greatneſs gives, or ſanguine youth deſires,
Of theſe, my ſoul, which haſt thou not enjoy'd?
With each, with all, thy fated pow'rs are cloy'd.
What can I then expect from length of days?
More wealth, more wiſdom, pleaſure, health, or praiſe?
More pleaſure! hope not that, deluded king!
For when did age increaſe of pleaſure bring?
Is health, of years prolong'd the common boaſt?
And dear-earn'd Fame, is it not cheaply loſt?
More wiſdom? that indeed were happineſs;
That were a wiſh a king might well confeſs:
But when did Wiſdom covet length of days;
Or ſeek its bliſs in pleaſure, wealth, or praiſe?
No:—Wiſdom views with an indifferent eye
All finite joys, all bleſſings born to die.
The ſoul on earth is an immortal gueſt,
Compell'd to ſtarve at an unreal feaſt:

A ſpark, which upward tends by nature's force;
A ſtream, diverted from its parent ſource;
A drop, diſſever'd from the boundleſs ſea;
A moment, parted from eternity;
A pilgrim panting for the reſt to come;
An exile, anxious for his native home.

Why ſhou'd I aſk my forfeit life to ſave?
Is Heav'n unjuſt, which dooms me to the grave?
Was I with hope of endleſs day deceiv'd?
Or of lov'd life am I alone bereav'd?
Let all the great, the rich, the learn'd, the wiſe,
Let all the ſhades of Judah's monarchs riſe;
And ſay, if genius, learning, empire, wealth,
Youth, beauty, virtue, ſtrength, renown, or health,
Has once revers'd th' immutable decree
On Adam paſs'd, of man's mortality?
What—have theſe eyes ne'er ſeen the felon worm
The damaſk cheek devour, the finiſh'd form?
On the pale roſe of blaſted beauty feed,
And riot on the lip ſo lately red?

Where

Where are our fathers? Where th' illuſtrious line
Of holy prophets, and of men divine?
Live they for ever? Do they ſhun the grave?
Or when did Wiſdom its profeſſor ſave?
When did the brave eſcape? When did the breath
Of Eloquence charm the dull ear of Death?
When did the cunning argument avail,
The poliſh'd period, or the varniſh'd tale;
The eye of light'ning, or the ſoul of fire,
Which thronging thouſands crowded to admire?
Ev'n while we praiſe the verſe, the poet dies;
And ſilent as his lyre great David lies.
Thou, bleſt Iſaiah! who, at God's command,
Now ſpeak'ſt repentance to a guilty land,
Muſt die! as wiſe and good thou hadſt not been,
As Nebat's ſon, who taught the land to ſin!

And ſhall *I* then be ſpar'd? O monſtrous pride!
Shall I eſcape, when Solomon has died?
If all the worth of all the ſaints was vain—
Peace, peace, my troubled ſoul, nor dare complain?

LORD!

LORD! I ſubmit. Complete thy gracious will!
For if Thou ſlay me *, I will truſt Thee ſtill.
O be my will ſo ſwallow'd up in thine,
That I may do *thy* will in doing *mine*.

---

* Job.

THE END.

SENSIBILITY:

A

POETICAL EPISTLE,

TO THE

HON. MRS. BOSCAWEN.

Spirits are not finely touch'd
But to fine iſſues ——— SHAKESPEARE.

The following little Poem was ſent ſeveral years ago, as an Epiſtle, to the honoured Friend to whom it is inſcribed. It has ſince been enlarged; and ſeveral paſſages have been added, or altered, as circumſtances required.

SENSIBILITY:

A

POETICAL EPISTLE

TO THE

HON. MRS. BOSCAWEN.

ACCEPT, Boscawen! theſe unpoliſh'd lays,
Nor blame too much the verſe you cannot praiſe.
For you far other bards have wak'd the ſtring;
Far other bards for you were wont to ſing.
Yet on the gale their parting muſic ſteals,
Yet, your charm'd ear the lov'd impreſſion feels.
You heard the lyres of Lyttelton and Young;
And this a Grace, and that a Seraph ſtrung.
Theſe are no more!—But not with theſe decline
The Attic chaſteneſs, and the flame divine.

Still,

Still, *ſad* * *Elfrida's Poet ſhall complain,*
Still either WARTON breathe his claſſic ſtrain.
Nor leſs the glories of the Gothic page;
Otranto's Fame ſhall vindicate the age.
Nor fear leſt genuine poeſy expire,
While tuneful BEATTIE wakes old Spenſer's lyre.
His ſympathethic lay his ſoul reveals,
And paints the perfect *Bard* from what he feels.

Illuſtrious LOWTH †! for him the muſes wove,
The faireſt garland from the greeneſt grove.
Tho' Latian bards had gloried in his name,
When in full brightneſs burnt the Latian flame;
Yet, fir'd with nobler hopes than tranſient Bays,
He ſcorn'd the meed of periſhable praiſe;
Spurn'd the cheap wreath by human ſcience won,
Borne on the wing ſublime of Amos' ſon:
He ſeiz'd his mantle as the Prophet flew,
And with his mantle caught his ſpirit too.

---

* Milton calls Euripides—*Sad Electra's Poet.*
† Biſhop of London.

To

To ſnatch bright beauty from devouring fate,
And bid it boaſt with him a deathleſs date;
To ſhew how Genius fires, how Taſte reſtrains,
While what both are his pencil beſt explains,
Have we not REYNOLDS *? Lives not JENYNS † yet,
To prove his loweſt title was a Wit?
Tho' purer flames thy hallow'd zeal inſpire
Than e'er were kindled at the Muſe's fire;
Thee, mitred ‡ CHESTER! all the Nine ſhall boaſt:
And is not JOHNSON theirs, himſelf an hoſt?

Yes:—ſtill for you your gentle ſtars diſpenſe
The charm of friendſhip, and the feaſt of ſenſe.
Yours is the bliſs, and Heav'n no dearer ſends,
To call the wiſeſt, brighteſt, beſt—your friends.

With CARTER trace the wit to Athens known,
Or find in MONTAGU that wit our own.

---

* See his Diſcourſes to the Academy.

† Mr. Jenyns had juſt publiſhed his Internal Evidences of the Chriſtian Religion.

‡ See the Biſhop's admirable Poem on Death.

Or,

Or, pleas'd, attend CHAPONE's inſtructive page;
Which charms her own, and forms the riſing age.
Or boaſt in WALSINGHAM the various pow'r,
To ſoothe the lonely, grace the letter'd hour;
To poliſh'd life its higheſt charms ſhe gives,
Whoſe ſong is muſic, and whoſe canvaſs lives.
DELANY ſhines, in worth ſerenely bright,
Wiſdom's ſtrong ray, and Virtue's milder light;
And ſhe who bleſs'd the friend, and grac'd the page
Of Swift, ſtill lends her luſtre to our age:
Long, long protract thy light, O ſtar benign!
Whoſe ſetting beams with added brightneſs ſhine!

O, much-lov'd BARBAULD! ſhall my heart refuſe
Its tribute to thy Virtues and thy Muſe?
While round thy brow the poet's wreathe I twine,
This humble merit ſhall at leaſt be mine,
In all thy praiſe to take a gen'rous part;
Thy laurels bind thee cloſer to my heart:
My verſe thy merits to the world ſhall teach,
And love the genius it deſpairs to reach.

Yet

Yet, what is wit, and what the Poet's art?
Can Genius ſhield the vulnerable heart?
Ah, no! where bright imagination reigns,
The fine-wrought ſpirit feels acuter pains:
Where glow exalted ſenſe, and taſte refin'd,
There keener anguiſh rankles in the mind:
There feeling is diffus'd thro' ev'ry part,
Thrills in each nerve, and lives in all the heart?
And thoſe, whoſe gen'rous ſouls each tear wou'd keep
From others' eyes, are born themſelves to weep.

Say, can the boaſted pow'rs of wit and ſong,
Of life one pang remove, one hour prolong?
Preſumptuous hope! which daily truths deride;
For you, alas! have wept—and GARRICK dy'd!
Ne'er ſhall my heart his lov'd remembrance loſe,
Guide, critic, guardian, glory of my muſe!
Oh, ſhades of Hampton! witneſs as I mourn,
Cou'd wit or ſong elude *his* deſtin'd urn?
Tho' living virtue ſtill your haunts endears,
Yet bury'd worth ſhall juſtify my tears!

T GARRICK!

GARRICK! thoſe pow'rs which form a friend were
thine;
And let me add, with pride, that friend was mine:
With pride! at once the vain emotion's fled;
Far other thoughts are ſacred to the dead.

Who now with ſpirit keen, yet judgment cool,
Th' unequal wand'rings of my muſe ſhall rule?
Whoſe partial praiſe my worthleſs verſe enſure?
For Candor ſmil'd, when GARRICK wou'd endure.
If harſher critics were compell'd to blame,
I gain'd in friendſhip what I loſt in fame;
And friendſhip's foſt'ring ſmiles can well repay
What critic rigour juſtly takes away.
With keen acumen how his piercing eye
The fault, conceal'd from vulgar view, wou'd ſpy!
While with a gen'rous warmth he ſtrove to hide,
Nay vindicate, the fault his judgment ſpied.
So pleas'd, cou'd he detect a happy line,
That he wou'd fancy merit ev'n in mine.
Oh gen'rous error, when by friendſhip bred!
His praiſes flatter'd me, but not miſled.

No

No narrow views cou'd bound his lib'ral mind;
His friend was man, his party human kind.
Agreed in this, oppoſing ſtateſmen ſtrove
Who moſt ſhou'd gain his praiſe, or court his love.
His worth all hearts as to one centre drew;
Thus Tully's Atticus was Cæſar's too.

His wit ſo keen, it never miſs'd its end;
So blameleſs too, it never loſt a friend;
So chaſte, that Modeſty ne'er learn'd to fear;
So pure, Religion might unwounded hear.

How his quick mind, ſtrong pow'rs, and ardent heart,
Impoveriſh'd nature, and exhauſted art,
A brighter bard records *, a deathleſs muſe!—
But I his talents in his virtues loſe:
Great parts are Nature's gift; but that he ſhone
Wiſe, moral, good and virtuous—was his own.

---

* Mr. Sheridan's Monody.

Tho' Time his ſilent hand acroſs has ſtole,
Soft'ning the tints of ſorrow on the ſoul;
The deep impreſſion long my heart ſhall fill,
And every mellow'd trace be perfect ſtill.

Forgive, BOSCAWEN, if my ſorrowing heart,
Intent on grief, forget the rules of art;
Forgive, if wounded recollection melt—
You beſt can pardon who have oft'neſt felt.
You, who for many a friend and hero mourn,
Who bend in anguiſh o'er the frequent urn;
You who have found how much the feeling heart
Shapes its own wound, and points itſelf the dart;
You, who from tender ſad experience feel
The wounds ſuch minds receive can never heal!
That grief a thouſand entrances can find,
Where parts ſuperior dignify the mind;
Wou'd you renounce the pangs thoſe feelings give,
Secure in joyleſs apathy to live?

For tho' in ſouls, where taſte and ſenſe abound,
Pain thro' a thouſand avenues can wound;

Yet

Yet the ſame avenues are open ſtill,
To caſual bleſſings as to caſual ill.
Nor is the trembling temper more awake,
To every wound which miſery can make,
Then is the finely-faſhion'd nerve alive
To every tranſport pleaſure has to give.
For tho', when home-felt joys the mind elate,
It mourns in ſecret for another's fate;
Yet when its own ſad griefs invade the breaſt,
Abroad, in others bleſſings, ſee it bleſt!
Ev'n the ſoft ſorrow of remember'd woe
A not unpleaſing ſadneſs may beſtow.

Let not the vulgar read this penſive ſtrain,
Their jeſts the tender anguiſh wou'd profane:
Yet theſe ſome deem the happieſt of their kind,
Whoſe low enjoyments never reach'd the mind;
Who ne'er a pain but for themſelves have known,
Nor ever felt a ſorrow but their own;
Who call romantic every finer thought,
Conceiv'd by pity, or by friendſhip wrought.

Ah! wherefore happy? where's the kindred mind?
Where, the large ſoul that takes in human kind?
Where, the beſt paſſions of the mortal breaſt?
Where, the warm bleſſing when another's bleſt?
Where, the ſoft lenitives of others' pain,
The ſocial ſympathy, the ſenſe humane?
The ſigh of rapture, and the tear of joy,
Anguiſh that charms, and tranſports that deſtroy?
For tender Sorrow has her pleaſures too;
Pleaſures, which proſp'rous Dulneſs never knew.
She never knew, in all her coarſer bliſs,
The ſacred rapture of a pain like this!
Nor think, the cautious only are the juſt;
Who never was deceiv'd I wou'd not truſt.
Then take, ye happy vulgar! take your part
Of ſordid joy, which never touch'd the heart.
Benevolence, which ſeldom ſtays to chuſe,
Leſt pauſing Prudence teach her to refuſe;
Friendſhip, which once determin'd, never ſwerves,
Weighs ere it truſts, but weighs not ere it ſerves;

And

And ſoft-eyed Pity, and Forgiveneſs bland,
And melting Charity with open hand;
And artleſs Love, believing and believ'd,
And gen'rous Confidence which ne'er deceiv'd;
And Mercy ſtretching out, ere Want can ſpeak,
To wipe the tear from pale Affliction's cheek;
Theſe ye have never known!—then take your part
Of ſordid joy, which never touch'd the heart.

Ye, who have melted in bright Glory's flame,
Or felt the ſpirit-ſtirring breath of fame!
Ye noble few! in whom her promis'd meed
Wakes the great thought, and makes the wiſh the deed!
Ye, who have taſted the delight to give,
And, God's own agents, bid the wretched live;
Who the chill haunts of Deſolation ſeek,
Raiſe the ſunk heart, and flaſh the fading cheek!
Ye, who with penſive Petrarch love to mourn,
Or weave freſh chaplets for Tibullus' urn;
Who cheriſh both in Hammond's plaintive lay,
The Provence myrtle, and the Roman bay!

Ye, who divide the joys, and ſhare the pains
Which merit feels, or Heav'n-born Fancy feigns;
Wou'd you renounce ſuch joys, ſuch pains as theſe,
For vulgar pleaſures, or for ſelfiſh eaſe?
Wou'd you, to 'ſcape the pain, the joy forego;
And miſs the tranſport, to avoid the woe?
Wou'd you the ſenſe of real ſorrow loſe,
Or ceaſe to woo the melancholy Muſe?
No, Greville *! no!—Thy ſong tho' ſteep'd in tears,
Tho' all thy ſoul in all thy ſtrain appears;
Yet woud'ſt thou all thy well-ſung anguiſh chuſe,
And all th' inglorious peace thou begg'ſt, refuſe.

Or you, BOSCAWEN! when you fondly melt,
In raptures none but mothers ever felt;
And view, enamour'd, in your beauteous race,
All LEVESON'S ſweetneſs, and all BEAUFORT'S grace!
Yet think what dangers each lov'd child may ſhare,
The youth if valiant, and the maid if fair;

---

* See the beautiful Ode to Indifference.

That

That perils multiply as bleſſings flow,
And conſtant ſorrows on enjoyments grow:
You, who have felt how fugitive is joy,
That while we claſp the phantom we deſtroy;
That life's bright ſun is dimm'd by clouded views,
And, who have moſt to love have moſt to loſe;
Yet from theſe fair poſſeſſions wou'd you part,
To ſhield from future pain your guarded heart?
Wou'd your fond mind renounce its tender boaſt,
Or wiſh their op'ning bloom of promiſe loſt?
Yield the dear hopes, which break upon your view,
For all the quiet, Dulneſs ever knew?
Debaſe the objects of your tend'reſt pray'r,
To ſave the dangers of a diſtant care?
Conſent, to ſhun the anxious fears you prove;
They leſs ſhou'd merit, or you leſs ſhou'd love?

Yet, while I hail the Sympathy Divine,
Which makes, O man! the wants of others thine!
I mourn heroic JUSTICE, ſcarcely own'd,
And PRINCIPLE for SENTIMENT dethron'd.

While

While FEELING boaſts her ever-tearful eye,
Stern TRUTH, firm FAITH, and manly VIRTUE fly.

Sweet SENSIBILITY! thou ſoothing pow'r,
Who ſhedd'ſt thy bleſſings on the natal hour,
Like fairy favours! Art can never ſeize,
Nor Affectation catch thy power to pleaſe:
Thy ſubtile eſſence ſtill eludes the chains
Of Definition, and defeats her pains.
Sweet Senſibility! thou keen delight!
Thou haſty moral! ſudden ſenſe of right!
Thou untaught goodneſs! Virtue's precious ſeed!
Thou ſweet precurſor of the gen'rous deed!
Beauty's quick reliſh! Reaſon's radiant morn,
Which dawns ſoft light before Reflection's born!
To thoſe who know thee not, no words can paint!
And thoſe who know thee, know all words are faint!
'Tis not to mourn becauſe a ſparrow dies;
To rave in artificial extaſies:
'Tis not to melt in tender *Otway*'s fires;
'Tis not to faint, when injur'd *Shore* expires:

'Tis

'Tis not becauſe the ready eye o'erflows
At *Clementina*'s, or *Clariſſa*'s woes.

Forgive, O RICHARDSON! nor think I mean,
With cold contempt, to blaſt thy peerleſs ſcene:
If ſome faint love of virtue glow in me,
Pure ſpirit! I firſt caught that flame from thee.

Wild ſoft Compaſſion ſilently relieves,
Loquacious *Feeling* hints how much ſhe gives;
Laments how oft her wounded heart has bled,
And boaſts of many a tear ſhe never ſhed.

As words are but th' external marks, to tell
The fair ideas in the mind that dwell;
And only are of things the outward ſign,
And not the things themſelves, they but define;
So exclamations, tender tones, fond tears,
And all the graceful drapery Pity wears;
Theſe are not Pity's ſelf, they but expreſs
Her inward ſufferings by their pictur'd dreſs;

And

And theſe fair marks, reluctant I relate,
Theſe lovely ſymbols may be counterfeit.
Celeſtial Pity! why muſt I deplore,
Thy ſacred image ſtamp'd on baſeſt ore?
There are, who fill with brilliant plaints the page,
If a poor linnet meet the gunner's rage:
There are, who for a dying fawn diſplay
The tend'reſt anguiſh in the ſweeteſt lay;
Who for a wounded animal deplore,
As if friend, parent, country were no more;
Who boaſt quick rapture trembling in their eye,
If from the ſpider's ſnare they ſave a fly;
Whoſe well-ſung ſorrows every breaſt inflame,
And break all hearts—but his from whom they
came:
Yet, ſcorning life's *dull* duties to attend,
Will perſecute a wife, or wrong a friend;
Alive to every woe by *fiction* dreſs'd;
The innocent he wrong'd, the wretch diſtreſs'd,
May plead in vain; their ſuff'rings come not near,
Or he relieves them cheaply, with a tear.

Not

Not ſo the tender moraliſt * of Tweed;
His *Man of Feeling* is a man indeed.

Oh, bleſs'd Compaſſion; Angel Charity.
More dear one genuine deed perform'd for thee,
Than all the periods Feeling e'er can turn,
Than all thy ſoothing pages, poliſh'd STERNE!

Not that by deeds alone this love's expreſt,
If ſo, the affluent only were the bleſt.
One ſilent wiſh, one pray'r, one ſoothing word,
The precious page of Mercy ſhall record;
One ſoul-felt ſigh by pow'rleſs Pity giv'n,
Accepted incenſe! ſhall aſcend to Heav'n.

Since trifles make the ſum of human things,
And half our mis'ry from our foibles ſprings;
Since life's beſt joys conſiſt in peace and eaſe,
And few can ſave or ſerve, but all may pleaſe:
Oh! let th' ungentle ſpirit learn from hence,
A ſmall unkindneſs is a great offence.

---

* Mr. Mackenzie, author of the Mirror, Man of Feeling, &c.

Large

Large bounties to beſtow we wiſh in vain;
But all may ſhun the guilt of giving pain.
To bleſs mankind with tides of flowing wealth,
With pow'r to grace them, or to crown with health,
Our little lot denies; but Heav'n decrees
To all, the gift of miniſt'ring to eaſe.
The gentle offices of patient love,
Beyond all flatt'ry, and all price above;
The mild forbearance at another's fault,
The taunting word, ſuppreſs'd as ſoon as thought;
On theſe Heav'n bade the bliſs of life depend,
And cruſh'd ill-fortune when he made a FRIEND.

A ſolitary bleſſing few can find,
Our joys with thoſe we love are intertwin'd;
And he, whoſe helpful tenderneſs removes
Th' obſtructing thorn which wounds the breaſt he loves,
Smooths not another's rugged path alone,
But ſcatters roſes to adorn his own.

The

The hint malevolent, the look oblique,
The obvious ſatire, or implied diſlike;
The ſneer equivocal, the harſh reply,
And all the cruel language of the eye;
The artful injury, whoſe venom'd dart,
Scarce wounds the hearing while it ſtabs the heart;
The guarded phraſe whoſe meaning kills, yet told,
The liſt'ner wonders how you thought it cold;
Small ſlights, contempt, neglect unmix'd with hate,
Make up in number what they want in weight.
Theſe, and a thouſand griefs minute as theſe,
Corrode our comfort, and deſtroy our eaſe.

As this ſtrong feeling tends to good or ill,
It gives freſh pow'r to vice or principle;
'Tis not peculiar to the wiſe and good;
'Tis paſſion's flame, the virtue of the blood.
But to divert it to its proper courſe,
There Wiſdom's pow'r appears, there Reaſon's force;
If, ill directed, it purſues the wrong,
It adds new ſtrength to what before was ſtrong;

Breaks

Breaks out in wild irregular deſires,
Diſorder'd paſſions, and illicit fires.
But if the virtuous bias rule the ſoul,
This lovely feeling then adorns the whole;
Sheds its ſweet ſunſhine on the moral part,
Nor waſtes on fancy what ſhou'd warm the heart.
Cold and inert the mental pow'rs wou'd lie,
Without this quick'ning ſpark of Deity.
To draw the rich materials from the mine,
To bid the maſs of intellect refine;
To melt the firm, to animate the cold,
And Heav'n's own impreſs ſtamp on nature's gold;
To give immortal MIND its fineſt tone,
Oh, SENSIBILITY! is all thy own.
THIS is th' etherial flame which lights and warms,
In ſong tranſports us, and in action charms.
'Tis THIS that makes the penſive ſtrains of GRAY*
Win to the open heart their eaſy way.

---

* This is meant of the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*; of which exquiſite Poem, *Senſibility* is, perhaps the characteriſtic beauty.

Makes

Makes the touch'd ſpirit glow with kindred fire,
When ſweet SERENA's * poet wakes the lyre.
'Tis THIS, tho' Nature's hidden treaſures lie,
Bare to the keen inſpection of her eye,
Makes PORTLAND's face its brighteſt rapture wear,
When her large bounty ſmooths the bed of care.
'Tis THIS that breathes thro' SEVIGNE's ſweet page,
That nameleſs grace which ſoothes a ſecond age.
'Tis THIS, whoſe charms the ſoul reſiſtleſs ſeize,
And gives BOSCAWEN half her pow'r to pleaſe.

Yet, why thoſe terrors? why that anxious care,
Since your laſt † hope the deathful war will dare?
Why dread that energy of ſoul which leads
To dang'rous glory by heroic deeds?

---

* Triumphs of Temper.

† Viſcount Falmouth, Admiral Boſcawen's only remaining ſon, was then in America, and at the battle of Lexington.

Why tremble leſt his ardent ſoul aſpire?—
You fear the ſon, becauſe you knew the ſire.
Hereditary valour you deplore,
And dread, yet wiſh to find one hero more.

THE END.

Juſt publiſhed,

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